

THE BEST ATHLETIC CHRISTMAS STORY EVER PENNED!

# FRANK MANLEY'S WEEKLY.

## GOOD STORIES OF YOUNG ATHLETES.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1905 by Frank Tousey, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

No. 16.

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 22, 1905.

Price 5 Cents.

### FRANK MANLEY'S CHRISTMAS GIFT; OR, THE LUCK THAT ICE HOCKEY BROUGHT.

BY "PHYSICAL DIRECTOR."



"It won't be a secret much longer," smiled Frank, as he threw open the door. Two teamsters staggered in, bearing Manley's splendid gift to the merry Up and At 'Em Boys.





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# Frank Manley's Christmas Gift;

OR,

## THE LUCK THAT ICE HOCKEY BROUGHT.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### FRANK MANLEY'S RIVAL.

"Who is this fellow Manley?"

"Well, he's captain of our athletic club."

"Anything of an athlete?"

"He's certainly the greatest junior in this part of the country."

"Humph!"

The last speaker's tone was not pleasant. Plainly it was not intended to be, and Dick Gaylord, member of the Woodstock Junior Athletic Club, turned promptly on his heel.

But the newcomer in Woodstock was not disposed to let the matter drop there.

He stood on the bank of the river, dangling a skate-bag from one arm.

He was a darkly handsome fellow of almost nineteen. Gaston Duval was his name. It was hinted that he belonged to one of the aristocratic Creole families of New Orleans.

All that was positively known of him, beyond his name, was the fact that he had just been enrolled as a student at Dr. Holbrook's Academy, and that he was fitting out for some university—Yale, it was said.

If he came from the South, however, Duval was not in any sense a typical Southerner.

In his speech there was not the soft intonation and the deliberate drawl of the Southerner.

Speech and manner were much more those of one who had spent his time much in Europe.

Duval had been in Woodstock but three days, and was still a guest at the hotel.

So far, he had not "mixed" with the academy boys, and, even when he spoke with them, there had been something in his manner that forbade the asking of questions about himself.

As Dick Gaylord turned to walk away, Gaston detained him by saying:

"I'd like a little more information, if you don't mind."

"Well?"

Gaston nodded at the handsome stone and brick gymnasium close by.

"Is that occupied wholly by the club?"

"Yes."

"Oh! I imagined that it belonged to some athletic club of grown men, and that you boys were permitted to exercise there."

"Guess again, then," crisped Dick. "It is the property



of the club—site and ground—and is held in trust for the club by a board of trustees.”

“I wonder if your club has any athletes in my class?” suggested Duval.

“Don’t know, I’m sure,” returned Dick, drily, as he sized up the other fellow with a not highly favoring eye.

“I fancy that, if I were to join your club, I’d show you a few new things.”

“Clothes?” asked Dick, speculatively eyeing the stranger.

From his dapper patent-leather boots to his fur-lined and trimmed overcoat, Gaston Duval certainly looked foppish.

“You’re having fun with me?” demanded Duval, with a smile that showed some rather “nasty” looking white teeth.

“Wouldn’t think of it,” returned Dick, with prompt disavowal. “But I was wondering what you could show us, and clothes were the first thing that popped into my mind.”

“No. I wasn’t thinking of clothes, although I suppose I have some. But I’ve also had some athletic training, and I imagine I’m rather superior to the average rustic athlete. Now, if I join your club——”

“I don’t think you will,” negatived Dick, with a shake of his head.

“Oh, I may decide to,” Duval assured him.

“It’s hardly likely,” persisted Dick Gaylord. “We’ve a full membership, you see, and a long waiting list.”

“But surely you increase your membership list for desirable members?”

“Can’t, under the rules.”

“Humph!”

“Pardon me, but I think you’ve said that before.”

Duval attempted to turn off this snub with an affectation of superior good breeding. He merely smiled, then glanced out up the ice to a splendidly strong looking youth who was whizzing on skates.

“Not a bad skater that,” observed the New Orleans youth.

“No—not bad,” admitted Dick, drawlingly. “That’s Frank Manley.”

“Oh, that’s your precious Manley, is it?”

“Yes; that’s Manley, though we don’t generally care to hear strangers refer to him in a sneering way.”

“Oh, I didn’t presume to sneer,” contradicted Duval. “You misunderstood me—that’s all.”

Cutting a wide sweep, Manley came in close to the shore, nodding to Gaylord.

“We missed you from the ice, this morning, Dick.”

“Yes; I overslept, like a fool,” admitted Dick, with a crestfallen air.

“But, surely, you’re going to get on the ice for a few minutes?”

“Well, yes, I will,” agreed Dick.

Frank was looking with polite interest at Gaston Duval.

“Introduce me, Dick, if you know the newcomer well enough,” whispered Manley, as Dick stepped out on the little wharf preparatory to adjusting his skates.

“Don’t know him well enough, and don’t like him well enough,” muttered Gaylord, in an undertone.

Frank smiled quietly, then sat down and removed his

skates. This done he stepped nimbly to the shore and walked over to where Duval stood.

“In the absence of any one to introduce us, I’ll present myself, if that isn’t too informal,” smiled Frank, extending his hand. “My name is Frank Manley.”

“And mine, Gaston Duval,” replied the other, barely extending a limp hand.

“I have seen you, of course, Mr. Duval, and understand that you are coming to the academy. It’s a fine old place, and we’ll all do our best to make you like it.”

“Is the academy as dead as the town?” asked Duval, with just a trace of the disagreeable in his voice.

“Oh, well, you know, it’s just a matter of opinion whether the town is dead. We manage to have some rather lively times here. We’ll try to show you a little life and amusement as we grow better acquainted. You’ll find all of the fellows a pleasant lot to know, I think.”

“Oh, not a doubt of that!”

Again the almost imperceptible sneer.

Frank received the sudden impression that this stranger was not likely to prove an agreeable fellow after all.

But Manley always strove not to form “snap judgments.”

So he went on, pleasantly:

“Most of our fellows belong right here in the town.”

“Not much society, then?”

This was almost an instant affront, but Manley decided to pass it off amiably.

“Of course, Mr. Duval, that depends on how exacting one’s standard is. Hullo, here come our fellows!”

Around the bend up the river came a strongly skating squad of Woodstock’s youth.

“And here comes something more worth looking at,” rejoined Duval, who had just turned to look the other way.

Around the corner came a squad of young ladies in “sweaters,” walking skirts and stout boots.

“That’s the Girls’ Club, out for a morning tramp,” Manley informed his companion.

“That brown-haired girl at the head is not a bad-looking one,” remarked Duval.

Frank Manley flushed quickly.

“Oh, you know her?” asked Duval, quickly, as Manley raised his hat and most of the girls nodded.

“I know them all,” replied Manley, briefly.

The girls had halted and broken ranks. They stood as if waiting for the approaching skaters.

“But that brown-haired girl, who seems to be the leader?”

“Miss Kitty Dunstan, president of the Girls’ Club.”

“Introduce me.”

Frank almost gasped, and changed color again. Surely this young stranger must have a queer idea of social usages in Woodstock if he imagined that strangers were presented hap-hazard to the young women.

“Introduce me,” prompted the newcomer again.

“Really, Mr. Duval, you don’t seriously ask me to do that before I have had time to know anything about you. I don’t want to seem anything like disagreeable, but I am very certain that the young ladies would resent it if they knew that I am not really acquainted with you.”



"There's only one in the bunch that I care to know," insisted Duval, coolly.

"It will be necessary to postpone the introduction, at least until I can secure Miss Dunstan's consent," rejoined Manley, a trifle stiffly.

He did not like the fellow's easy assumption.

"Oh, well," smiled Duval, "I will introduce myself, perhaps, as you did with me."

Now Manley could no longer make the pretense of being amiable. He surveyed his companion with a look of astonishment.

"Of course you did not realize what you were saying, Duval. It would not do to thrust yourself upon the young ladies of this town. It would certainly be resented."

Duval smiled, provokingly.

Manley turned on his heel and walked away.

"I was in hopes that Duval would prove a wholly decent sort of fellow," muttered our hero. "In that case, we could have made it pleasant for him here. I hope my first impression of him isn't the right one."

Gaston Duval stood looking after Manley with more of that provoking disagreeable smile.

"So that's Manley, the leader of the youngsters of this town, is it? I don't believe I think much of him. He's too independent, and needs trimming. He hasn't perception enough to see that I've been used to leading where I go. I'll take him down a bit. Perhaps the easiest way would be to make him look like a fool in athletics. I could do that easily enough. There he is talking to the brown-haired girl now."

"Who's your friend?" Kitty was inquiring.

"Well, he's not exactly a friend yet," replied Manley. "He's a new student at the academy, and I've just introduced myself."

"Does he seem like a nice sort?"

"I don't want to say, on such a short acquaintance."

## CHAPTER II.

### "A HOG ON ICE."

Gaston Duval was not at the academy that Monday morning.

It was not his purpose to begin his studies until after the holidays.

For that matter, the young man seldom allowed anything to interfere with his pleasure.

All of his short life he had been a spoiled child.

His father, now dead, had left a large fortune in trust for him.

Duval's bachelor uncle, also very wealthy, had, in his own queer way, made a pet of Gaston.

It was not the best way in the world. Uncle Claude, himself a devotee of swift pleasure, had brought up his young nephew in the same paths.

It was Claude Duval's belief that there was no city in

the world for a "gentleman" outside of Paris. And in Paris the uncle had led a mostly depraved life.

Yet the uncle had had two sensible ideas in the rearing of a boy.

He believed that a boy should possess a splendid physique and a good education.

From early years Gaston Duval had spent much time in the hands of the physical trainers in this country and abroad.

In his mental education the young man had not done quite as well.

He had tried, a few months before, to enter Yale, but had failed at "exams."

For a while Gaston had hoped that this would end his days of study.

But, at last, the uncle had prevailed upon his nephew to make one more effort to get into a good college.

It was for the purpose of brushing up in his studies that Gaston had come to Woodstock. The reason for his choosing that particular town and its academy was not apparent.

Duval thought quite often of Manley through the forenoon, and every time that he did so he became firmer in his intention to "make a fool" of that popular young athlete.

Through inquiries Duval learned that the boys were practicing hockey every afternoon at present.

"Fortunately, I'm very much at home on the ice," thought Duval. "And I wonder if that brown-haired girl is on the ice often?"

In the middle of the afternoon, just when he knew that school would be closed, Gaston Duval sallied forth from the hotel.

From his large wardrobe he had selected a close-fitting gray suit that displayed his athletic, slim figure to the best advantage.

He wore no overcoat, a chamois vest under his shirt supplying its place as to warmth. He was nattily booted, wore faultless gloves and one of the most expensive derby hats sold.

At the ice he stooped long enough to adjust his skates. Then, drawing on his gloves again, Duval went off on an indolent out-sweep, soon reversing and skating backward with ease and grace.

Before long he began to cut intricate figures on the ice, though moving always in that slow, indolent way of his.

With several hundred ordinary skaters on the ice, Duval soon attracted attention. Many of the skaters stopped to watch his gyrations admiringly.

"What a handsome fellow! And so graceful!" he heard one pretty girl remark.

But Duval did not even smile. He knew his good points, and was accustomed to admiration.

But the Up and At 'Em Boys were not here where the skating crowd disported. Nor was the brown-haired girl.

So the handsome young skater turned and glided on up the river.

Ah, here they were! Just above the bend, where a hockey rink had been scraped smooth.

The goals were in place, and two practice teams, under



Hal Spofford and Joe Prescott, respectively first and second lieutenants of the club, were gathered, just beyond the rink to listen to Coach Frank Manley's final instructions for the game.

Over past the rink on the other side of the ice several girls on skates were grouped. One of them was Kitty Dunstan.

"There's my brown-haired girl," ehuekled Gaston. "Now to let her get a glimpse of what real skating is!"

The rink was clear. He glided out on the smooth ice nonchalantly.

Then, in swift succession, and sure that he had caught the eyes of the girls, Gaston Duval did the simple figures, the double and treble figures, and did them all without a flaw.

For four or five minutes the Up and At 'Em Boys looked on. Manley led in some generous applause.

Then Joe skated over to this prize performer, and said, good-naturedly:

"Great work, that! It's bully! But now, do you mind leaving the rink so that we can go on with our game? Perhaps you'd like to watch the play?"

"Want me to leave?" asked Duval, tartly.

"Just the part that's been seraped for a rink, you know," Joe explained.

"But I didn't know that the river was any one's private property," drawled Duval, loudly enough for the girls to hear.

"It isn't," Joe admitted. "But it's just the same as in a park or on a common. Courtesy gives players enough ground or ice of their own for them to play their game uninterrupted."

"I am afraid I shall want to skate here just a little longer," said Duval, thoughtfully.

Joe reddened. He had not meant to be aggressive, but the other's manner quickly brought out all that was combative in Prescott.

"Do you know what I think of when I look at you?" Joe blurted.

"Something pleasant, I suppose?" inquired the other.

"When I look at you," announced Joe, "all I can think of is just the ordinary, plain, vulgar hog on ice!"

At that the on-looking girls tittered, and Duval turned first red and then white.

"Rustie," inquired the newcomer, "are you as ready to make your words good as you are to talk?"

"Surely!" retorted Joe, promptly and cheerfully.

"Then, if you will be good enough to follow me to the shore——"

Eager to oblige, Joe himself led the way, skating past the Up and At 'Em Boys, who promptly followed, Duval gliding in among them.

At a sign from Kitty Dunstan the girls skated down the river, and were quickly out of sight.

"Any choice as to spot?" asked Joe, obligingly.

"Any place," agreed Duval.

"Come into the woods a little way, please," urged Man-

ley. "We don't want to give any rough-house exhibition to skaters going by."

So into the snow-covered woods the youngsters went, more than thirty of them engaging in tramping down the snow.

"Too bad I haven't a friend in the crowd," said Duval, meaningly.

"You don't need one," rejoined Manley, coldly. "Fair play is a standard with us."

"Well, I'm ready," announced Duval, without taking off his jacket.

"So am I, then," came promptly from Joe, as he faced his enemy.

Duval did not offer to put his hands up. Instead, he smiled insolently at Joe, as he demanded:

"Do you know what you seem to need?"

"More of a man to fight with?" cross-questioned Joe.

"You need just one good, sound, corrective kick!"

"Do you know how to kick?" asked Joe, imperturbably.

For answer, Duval raised his right foot, slowly and deliberately, as if to implant a kick.

As the foot shot out, Joe caught it with one hand.

It was his intention to tip Duval backwards on his head.

But swift as a flash Duval turned his body over, landing with both hands on the ground.

It all happened like a flash. While the Creole boy rested his weight on both his hands, and Joe still held his right foot, Duval shot his left foot up into the air.

That flying foot landed with fearful force squarely across Joe's right eye.

It was a fearful blow, Duval's heel landing with much of the force of a hammer.

Instantly Joe let go of the foot he held, and, without any outcry, sank back, holding to his damaged eye.

As for Duval, he sprang lightly to his feet, showing a smiling face to the ominous-looking Up and At 'Em Boys.

It was a trick of "la savatte," the French method of boxing with hands and feet.

The trick had been cleverly done, but there were instant cries of:

"Shame!"

"I don't know as I would say anything, fellows," urged Manley. "You know, we sometimes use jiu-jitsu. If this is Mr. Duval's style of fighting, let him use it as long as he finds it to his advantage."

Then, turning, Manley stepped over to Joe, who, squatting on the ground, was submitting to an examination of his injury by Inow Sato, the Japanese member of the club, and the club's instructor in jiu-jitsu.

"The sight will not be hurt," said Sato, quietly. "It will be a bad-looking eye for a few days. That's all."

"Oh, well, the black and blue can be painted out," murmured Hal, cheerily.

So Manley stepped back to the newcomer in Woodstock.

"Duval. Prescott will not be in shape to resume this contest to-day. Later on, I feel certain that he will insist on doing so. For the present——"



"Hold on! I can soon go on with this," declared Joe, trying to rise, but Sato forced him back to the ground.

"You'll not go on with it to-day, Joe," Manley assured him.

Then, to Duval:

"Will you accept a substitute—myself, perhaps?" asked Frank.

"No, thank you. I've no quarrel with any one else."

Turning, with head held high, Gaston Duval turned and made for the river.

"I thought it was to be a boxing set-to," muttered Joe. "Now, I know better what to expect and what to pass back. I'll have another meeting with that fellow when I'm in shape again. After our next meeting—say, fellows, have you any idea what folks will say then?"

"What?" chorused several of the Up and At 'Em Boys.

"Well," grumbled Joe, "after our next meeting folks will gather around Duval, and look down at him in the box, and they'll say:

"How natural Duval looks!"

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE WOODSTOCK WAY.

It was Christmas week, as the storekeeper reckons it—that is to say, the week before Christmas, when presents are bought most heavily.

Frank was carrying a heavy line this year. His clerk, Tom Greenheart, who had usually one young woman assistant, now had five.

They were needed to handle the trade.

Frank did not miss his mornings before school on the ice, but in the afternoons he now found himself with much to attend to at the store.

Nearly all of his evening time, too, was called for at the store, though Manley made it a point to get over to the gym for a brief while every evening.

Gaston Duval was making for himself, this week, a sort of a name.

On Wednesday afternoon he encountered some of the young athletes from Bradford on the ice.

In his own cool way, and without seeming to put himself much in the wrong, Duval provoked Tod Owen, captain of the Bradfords, into a sharp reply.

At this Duval took prompt offence, and, inside of thirty seconds, the challenge had been passed and accepted.

Tod insisted on a straight fist fight. Duval agreed. Twelve rounds were fought to a finish.

At boxing Duval turned out to be a scientific demon.

In the twelfth Tod went down in the snow, too badly used up to rise promptly.

Woodstock was no less astonished than Bradford was. Tod Owen was regarded as a quick, accurate and hard hitter.

After that Duval went around in his quiet, insolent way,

smiling into the face of every young athlete whom he met.

Most of the boys in the Woodstocks knew well enough that they could not best an opponent who could despatch Tod so unerringly.

Yet, to the credit of the Woodstock boys, it must be said that none would have dodged trouble had it been openly thrust upon them.

Joe, with his eye neatly painted, did not look the worse for wear—but he was thinking!

"Don't go looking for trouble just at present, old fellow," Manley urged him.

"Why not?" grumbled Joe.

"Remember the season."

"The peace and good will era, eh?" grinned Joe.

"Well, it means something, or ought to," said Manley, earnestly.

"Wouldn't get into a scrap yourself, this week, eh?"

"Not if it could possibly be avoided," Frank replied, promptly.

"Well, we'll see," said Joe, dubiously. "But say—what do you make of that Duval fellow knocking Tod around so?"

"Duval can take care of himself—that's all," Manley rejoined.

"Duval will be getting chesty, now, and hunting you up," predicted Joe.

"I hope not. Still, he knows my address," Manley returned, quietly.

"I hope we won't have any scraps, either," said Hal, soberly. "It don't seem just right at any time, but doubly bad at this great, happy season of the year."

"I think I'll go and talk to Sato," laughed Joe, rising. "He's a pagan, and Christmas doesn't mean anything to him."

"You'll get small comfort there," laughed Frank. "Sato is all for peace the year around. That's where the pagan can give us a lesson once in a while."

It was Wednesday evening, and the chums had dropped into Manley's store with the news of Tod's defeat. They were in the little office now, but Frank, looking out into the store, saw that he was needed and hurried away.

"As sure as guns," muttered Joe, "Duval will go after Frank. If he can thrash our captain Duval will feel that he's cock of the walk."

"He can't thrash Frank," Hal retorted, with great promptness.

"I hope he can't. But you see, he didn't find Tod difficult. However, the next chance I get—— But I forgot. Captain's orders not to even talk fight this week."

"Or next, either," laughed Hal.

"Jupiter! How long does this holiday season last?" protested Joe.

Soon after he went out, determined to find Sato, anyway.

Gaston Duval was abroad this Wednesday night, seeking whatever amusement he might find.

Few of Tod's blows had landed heavily on him, and none had done him any harm.



Enveloped in his nattiest fur overcoat, this young exquisite looked, from head to foot, like a tailor's model.

He had failed to make Kitty Dunstan's acquaintance so far, but he had just learned that she was Frank Manley's sweetheart.

That had put a mischievous new idea into his head.

"Perhaps I'd better go a bit slow on trouble this week, or a little longer," he muttered. "I mustn't queer myself with the Dunstan girl. I must make her acquaintance, and then I'll do my best at being the model young man for a while. I'll try to freeze Manley out in that direction. If I fail by fair means—why, I suppose I know a few little tricks that might be serviceable!"

Just then he stopped short, pretending to look in a store window.

For Kitty Dunstan, accompanied by her chum, Grace Scott, came down the street, both bent on holiday purchases.

A wonderfully bright and pretty picture Kitty presented on this cold, crisp night. She, too, was exquisitely fur-clad, and through the fur could be seen the glint of nestling snowflakes.

Her costume set off the grace and strength of her figure to the best advantage.

Duval, himself an athlete, and a lover of the athletic figure, felt his pulses thrill as he caught the first glimpse of Kitty stepping along with that superb carriage which she owed to a year-old interest in athletics.

"Whew! It would be worth while cutting Manley out, even if I had no grudge against him!"

When the girls had passed he stepped along behind them.

Duval knew much better than to seek Kitty's acquaintance through any other medium than an introduction.

But luck was coming his way.

"Well, my boy, splendid, cheery sight, isn't it—all this Christmas bustle and cheer?" asked a kindly voice.

It was Dr. Holbrook, the venerable principal of the academy, who put the question.

He had stopped to rest a benevolent hand on the young man's shoulder.

"How are you getting on in Woodstock, anyway?" asked the doctor.

"Well," replied Gaston, with a shrug of his shoulders, as he drew up at the edge of the sidewalk, "of course it is a little lonely here at the outset. I know hardly any one in the town."

"Have you met Manley yet?" queried Dr. Holbrook.

"Oh, Manley?" replied Duval, with another shrug of his shoulders. "I fancy that he's hardly of my kind."

"Why, I am very sure that you'll like him tremendously when you get to know him well. Every one likes Manley."

Duval shrugged his shoulders again.

It was evident that Dr. Holbrook had heard none of the stories of strife.

Here came Kitty, back down the street, her face glowing, lip parted in a smile and her eyes dancing.

"Doctor," said Duval, suddenly, "can you do me the great favor of presenting me to Miss Dunstan?"

"Delighted," replied the old man, quickly.

He stood still until Kitty had reached him. She nodded respectfully to the old man.

"Good evening, Miss Dunstan," greeted the old man. "Miss Dunstan, will you permit me to introduce Mr. Duval? Mr. Duval has come to Woodstock to become one of my pupils. I have been long acquainted with Mr. Duval's uncle—a most estimable man. (Surely, there were some things that the good old doctor did not know!) Mr. Duval, Miss Dunstan."

Kitty nodded coolly, and an introduction to Miss Scott followed.

Then the doctor remembered that he had come down the street to see about his mail, and stepped along to the post-office.

"Miss Dunstan," began Duval, "perhaps you wouldn't believe how eagerly I have waited for this presentation."

Kitty looked at him with cold, unflinching eyes. There was an odd rigidity in the lines around her pretty mouth.

"Mr. Duval," she said, quickly, "I am going to ask a favor of you."

"Delighted!" he cried. "Ask me a thousand."

"No, thank you. One will be enough."

"Then please tell me. I am wholly at your commands!"

"What I am going to ask of you, Mr. Duval, is that you do not consider this introduction as being, in any sense, a preliminary to an acquaintance."

"Why—what——" he stammered.

"I must have made my request sufficiently plain," replied Kitty, her cold eyes still meeting his unwaveringly.

"But Dr. Holbrook——"

"Well?"

"Presented me," choked Duval.

"I know."

"May I ask," he went on with an effort to recover his dignity, "why you permitted the introduction?"

"Merely because I did not wish to wound that fine old gentleman's feelings."

"You admit that he is a gentleman," persisted Duval. "Yet he presented me, and he knows all about me and my family. Surely, therefore, you must regard me as being worthy of your acquaintance?"

"It is not a question of worthiness," retorted Kitty, in the same cool tones. "It is a woman's right to know or not to know a person. I am using the privilege of my sex."

"And you tell me, cruelly, that you do not wish to know me."

"I am glad that you understand, Mr. Duval. It saves me further explanation."

"But won't you at least grant me a place on the waiting list among those who wish to know you?" pleaded Duval, with an attempt at gallantry.

"There is no need of a waiting list for those whom I care to know," was Kitty's answer.

"Is this the Woodstock way of dashing all one's hopes of pleasant acquaintance?" protested Gaston.

"It is Miss Dunstan's way, anyway."

"What do you think? Can't you say something to help



me out of this very unpleasant predicament?" pleaded Duval, turning to Grace.

"All the answer I have for you, sir," retorted Miss Scott, with equal coldness, "is to extend Miss Dunstan's request to myself."

"I wish I had the right to insist on some better explanation," hinted Duval, pleadingly.

He had gotten over the first shock, but the jar to his vanity was still there.

"You tacitly admit that you have no real right to further explanation," Kitty retorted. "Would you mind if I wish you good evening?"

"Is that all you can say to me, Miss Dunstan? Does your natural kindness suggest no more?"

"Nothing but good-by."

Miss Dunstan would have walked away, but Gaston Duval had the audacity to step before her.

Kitty drew back, taking no pains to conceal either her astonishment or her displeasure.

"Miss Dunstan, I feel that I must say a little more. Some one has deliberately poisoned your mind against me."

"No," said Kitty decisively.

Duval cast about in his mind for an explanation.

"Frank Manley——"

"Is he a friend of yours?" asked Kitty, cuttingly.

"No."

"Then we need not discuss him."

"Has he tried to influence you against me?"

"No."

"Are you sure that you are telling me the truth?" demanded Duval, desperately.

The next second he could have bitten his tongue for that blunder.

A wave of color overspread Miss Dunstan's face.

"You have forfeited even the right to continue this conversation another instant," she retorted. "My instinct served me well—you are not a gentleman!"

"Not a gentleman?" he cried, savagely, losing his head before this unexpected defeat. "Then I suppose your ideal of a gentleman is Frank Manley—that young—that cheap storekeeper! Frank Manley, who——"

"Who is present to speak for himself," interposed a warning voice, and our hero, lifting Gaston Duval quickly, stood him in the gutter.

## CHAPTER IV.

### A LOSS OF DIGNITY.

Duval was off the sidewalk and standing in the gutter ere he had time to realize what was being done with him.

His face flushed angrily, the more so because already a dozen people in the hurrying Christmas throng had noticed and had stopped to look on.

Frank's next motion was that of raising his hat to the girls.

Then he turned to look at Duval with a glance of calm scrutiny, saying:

"I trust you will pardon me if I seemed to take a liberty. But you appeared to be right in the path of the young ladies, who wished to pass on. Of course your being in their way was wholly unintentional!"

"You have taken altogether too great a liberty!" choked Gaston Duval.

"Then it was entirely due to a misunderstanding of the circumstances," Manley replied, with an easy smile.

The onlooking crowd was increasing in size, though it stood at a respectful distance.

"Later on," began Duval, "I shall——"

"Look out!" thundered a hoarse warning voice.

There was the clatter of hoofs, the rumble of heavy wheels.

The driver was attempting to run his truck up to the sidewalk.

The horses, nervous, shied and reared slightly, yet came on in toward the curb.

Gaston was forced to spring to the sidewalk.

Frank made a quick movement forward to aid him, but the other, misunderstanding the intention, dodged back.

The horses were upon Duval. Only by extraordinary agility could he save himself from being run over.

It had all happened in a second, and in another second Gaston had made his backward leap for safety.

He slipped on a bit of ice under one foot, and fell backward—out of danger, but——

Splash!

Down on his back, in a puddle of mud, slush and water went the unfortunate youth.

His hat, tilted somewhat on the back of his head, was dented in badly.

As Gaston Duval sprang angrily to his feet he was a "sight."

His fur was bedraggled, his coat sides presented aspects of coating, dripping mud.

Even his dainty gloves were now the color of the street mud.

Like a flash he ran around the truck, which had drawn up.

The onlookers were shrieking with laughter, a fact that added to Duval's misery and made his face white with ugliness.

Kitty and Grace were disappearing into Manley's store. A quiet word from our hero had caused them to withdraw from the scene.

"That was your fault!" cried Duval, shaking one of his muddy-gloved hands in Manley's face.

"Why, you are wholly mistaken," Frank replied.

"You reached out to push me, and I slipped."

"You mean, Duval, that I saw your danger, and reached out to help you."

"That's a lie!"

And now the onlookers knew that there would be trouble.

Frank's face went a trifle white, in a twinkling, but he swallowed and endeavored to remain cool.



"Duval," he said, in a low tone, "this is no time to discuss it. If you knew how you look, at this minute, you realize that you are in no condition to appear dignified. Wait until your clothes are clean."

"I believe I'll make yours muddier than mine are," gritted Duval, in so low a tone that the onlookers could not hear.

Thus it was driven home hard to the excited, dangerous youth what a disreputable picture he presented.

To add to his discomfiture, he could hear the jeering remarks of spectators, and could see many grinning faces.

Yet his anger triumphed.

Duval clenched his fists, prepared to leap forward.

Frank, a little whiter still—for his calmness was that only of self-control—hardly seemed to move, yet he placed himself on guard.

But Gaston suddenly felt himself seized by the collar.

To add to the outrage, he was yanked violently back, with as little ceremony as if he had been a runaway horse, while a strong voice demanded:

"What's this?"

"That's right, chief!" cheered a spectator.

"Lock the rowdy up!"

Duval wheeled, to find himself confronted by the burnished badge of the chief of police.

And Chief Griscomb still kept a vigorous grip on the young man's collar.

"How dare you?" choked Duval. "Let me go!"

But Griscomb held on, grimly eyeing the youth.

Then, his passion getting wholly the better of him, Gaston Duval tried to turn and strike Griscomb in the face.

But the chief, apparently, had anticipated that move.

He pushed Duval away, and the blow fell short.

"Stop that, you little beast!" roared the chief. "If you try that again, you'll know how it feels to have your head stove in with a policeman's billy!"

"Little beast?"

That epithet sent all the blood surging to Duval's brain.

But the hooting of the crowd and the masterful grip that the chief still retained on his collar showed the newcomer that he was carrying things so far to the bad as to make himself utterly ridiculous.

So, keeping his hands at his sides, where they belonged, he tried the effect of haughtiness.

"Let me go," he demanded, imperiously.

"I will, if I'm satisfied that you've done nothing wrong," retorted the chief.

"You'll let me go at once, officer, or you may discover that you have made a costly mistake."

"Threaten me again," growled Griscomb, "and I'll look you up for the night and send you to court in the morning without breakfast."

"Do so," begged Gaston, in an ugly tone. "I can furnish bail and engage a lawyer."

"What was the trouble, Manley?" demanded the chief, turning to our hero.

"Why, Mr. Duval, in attempting to dodge horses that

were trotting up to the curb, had the misfortune to slip and fall in the mud."

"But it looked as if he was trying to hit you," insisted Griscomb.

"Perhaps that was natural enough," Frank replied. "He was under the mistaken impression that I tried to push him down."

"Have you any charge to make against this fellow?" persisted the chief.

"Why, no; certainly not, sir."

"Then you can go—this time," suggested Griscomb, letting go his tenacious hold on Gaston's coat collar. "But, as you are a newcomer here, let me warn you against trying on any rowdyism at any time. If you do, you'll find yourself in a cell. And the judge in this town isn't easy with well-dressed rowdies. He doesn't let 'em off with a light fine. He sends 'em to jail to work for thirty days. That's what would have happened to you if Manley had made a charge."

"He'd ought to make a charge!" grunted some one in the crowd.

"That's right!" came in several voices.

"Now, scoot!" ordered Griscomb. "And I'll stay here to see that you do."

"Run him in!"

"Jug him!"

Duval could only feel, as he beat a hasty and chagrined retreat, that he had hit very wide of the mark in trying to make an impressive figure in Woodstock.

"But the tables will turn," he grumbled, under his breath, hot with his humiliation. "The tables will turn—I'll trip 'em!"

Then, as he hurried onward, he heard some one shout:

"Three cheers for Frank Manley!"

The cheers came, in volleys.

"It won't be long before they'll be hooting Manley with just as much vim!" thought the stranger-youth with an evil smile.

"You did just right, old fellow," Hal assured his chum, when he heard the recital later in the evening. "Duval got the worst of it—badly—and you followed your own advice about respecting the holiday season. Oh, but Duval must be sore!"

Indeed, Gaston was sore.

He was up nearly the whole night, plotting, thinking, telephoning, wiring and writing.

It was not the first time that this much-traveled youth had made things lively for an enemy.

And he was well supplied with money—the sinews of such warfare!

## CHAPTER V.

### DUVAL'S ANSWER.

Frank had learned from Kitty just what had taken place before his arrival on the sidewalk.

"Don't take that up and carry it further, Frank," she begged.



"It doesn't seem to me that I need to," smiled Frank. "Kit, you appear to be very well able to take care of yourself. Still, after your snub, if Duval makes any further attempt to claim your acquaintance——"

"Oh, he won't," Kitty interposed, quickly.

"I hope not," was all Manley said, and he said it very quietly.

So there the matter rested for the time being.

The next morning Frank and most of the other Up and At 'Em Boys were on the ice before daylight, getting in their full measure of hard skating.

That afternoon there was no work on the ice, the members of the Girls' Club claiming the youngsters for the weekly afternoon hop on the gym's smooth floor.

Some girl, judging by the writing, had sent Gaston Duval, by mail, a local newspaper clipping describing the dance of the week before. The sender wrote her regrets that she could not send Duval an invitation, as his manners were "not up to the mark."

Had she known of this, Kitty Dunstan would have been greatly annoyed.

It was not a member of her club, however, who had perpetrated the hoax.

But Duval, in the privacy of his room at the hotel, went into a white-hot passion over the insult.

Friday morning, the snow being thin, Frank decided to forego his skating in favor of a good run.

He felt that that would be the best preparation for Saturday's ice-hockey game with Tod Owen's Bradfords.

Woodstock had won the game the year before, and wanted to win this one also.

Of late, Bradford had shown an annoying habit of winning unexpectedly, but every Woodstock boy was determined that the great annual hockey game should go in that way.

It was only when he rose and looked out of his window Friday morning that Frank decided upon the run. The weather looked highly favorable.

Yet, by the time that he got down to the ice Frank discovered that his four greatest chums—Hal, Joe, Sato and Jackets Winston—had already gone off up the ice.

Only Gaylord and Foster were about at the moment. Both declared in favor of skating.

"Oh, I'll go by my lonesomes," Frank smiled, inwardly.

He had on a pair of stout running shoes, and started off at once.

He chose the river road, that led to Bradford.

Early as it was, his departure, and alone, was noted by strange eyes.

As for Manley, he ran on, thinking of little else than the glory of such a morning run.

He had gone two miles of the way, and it was still dark, when he was overtaken by a double sleigh containing three men.

"Can't we give you a lift, son?" called out the driver, reining in his horses somewhat.

"No, thank you," laughed Frank.

"Oh! Thought you seemed in a hurry to get somewhere."

"I'm running for exercise," Frank explained, amiably.

"Mighty hard exercise, ain't it?" demanded another occupant of the sleigh, which was now gliding alongside the young athlete.

"Hard?" smiled Manley. "Not at all, when one is used to it."

"Wonder if I could run far?" spoke up one of the men in the sleigh.

"Try it," suggested Manley.

"I believe I will."

He leaped from the sleigh into the road, going along at the same easy jog that our hero had taken.

"Come on out and have a try," dared the new runner.

Another of the trio leaped into the road and began to run.

"Whew! Takes my wind," panted this last runner.

"Your style's wrong, I guess. Fall in behind this young man and run just as you see him doing."

Both strangers were now behind our hero, while the driver kept with them, laughingly encouraging his friends.

Thus they made a quarter of a mile.

Manley had not the slightest suspicion of anything wrong, until it was too late.

He felt himself struck suddenly from behind. He pitched face downward into the snow.

Frank tried to roll over on to his back.

Before he could do this, he was struck on the back of the head with something that felt like a short piece of rubber hose.

Whatever it was, it half-dazed him.

There were three men a-top of him now.

They were powerful wretches, too. That Frank quickly discovered.

Click! click!

They had handcuffed him in jig time.

And now one of the trio choked him, stopping any shouting, while the other gagged him.

Last of all, the feet received attention.

"Into the sleigh with him," ordered a voice that Manley recognized as belonging to the driver.

Frank Manley was not at school that morning.

Still, the fact did not occasion great surprise.

It was the season of holiday sales, and very likely the young athlete had decided that all his time was needed at the store.

At noon, Hal, as he left the academy, turned and walked briskly to the store.

"Manley here?" demanded Hal, as he entered the store.

"Why, no, not yet," answered Tom Greenheart.

"What time did he leave?"

"He hasn't been here this morning."

"Are you sure of that?" asked Hal, sharply.

"Why, of course I am," Greenheart rejoined.

Without asking more, Hal turned to the telephone.

He asked for Mrs. Manley's number, and quickly made the surprising discovery that she had not seen Frank at all that morning.

"Oh, well, never mind, Mrs. Manley," replied Hal,



quickly. "I'll let the matter go until I see Frank at school after lunch. I expected to find him here, but he must have gone to lunch with some other fellow. Thank you, and good-by."

Hal rang off quickly, before Mrs. Manley could ask any questions.

"There's something mighty wrong here," quivered Hal. "Frank hasn't been at school, or at his store, or at home—about the only places he ever goes to except the gym."

As a forlorn hope, Hal rang up the gym. But there was no answer.

"Gaylord said Frank had gone on a run along the river road," reflected Hal. "That appears to be the last that has been seen of Frank. I wonder if we'd better start a search at once?"

Joe came in just then, on his way between post-office and luncheon.

Hal explained the situation to him.

Joe's eyes flashed.

"Looks like too much Duval," he said, shortly.

"Harm to Frank from that quarter?" cried Hal, in dismay.

"Well, you know about the mix-up on the street the other night."

"But, if Duval is ugly, he surely is not afraid to fight."

"Duval's grudge against Frank might not be satisfied by a mere fist-fight," grunted Prescott.

"Then we'll put such a shadow on Duval that he can't move without being tracked," flashed Hal. "Wait here!"

"Where are you going?"

"To the hotel."

"What for?"

"To see Duval."

"Then I'll go, too," declared Joe, quickly.

"No; don't, old fellow. You've had trouble with him already. I haven't, and so I can fake up an excuse for going to see him without shaking any red rag. You stay here, Joe, and think out how we're to place a shadow on Duval. Call Jackets over here by 'phone. He can track anybody without being caught."

Hal was off at once, while Joe got busy in other ways.

Yet it was not long ere Spofford bumped into the little rear office of Manley's. He found Joe and young Winston there.

"Duval isn't at the hotel," announced Hal, almost in a whisper. "What's more, he hasn't been there since morning. His key is in his box in the letter rack."

"Then——"

"Oh, if Duval is at the bottom of anything, he's been a long while about it!"

"What on earth can he have done to Frank?" palpitated Joe.

"Hasn't killed him, anyway," spoke up Jackets, cheerfully.

"That's not a sure thing, either," retorted Hal, desperately. "Gaston Duval isn't like other fellows. He might be capable, even, of taking the risk of killing any one who got in his way."

"More likely the scheme is something else," averred Joe. "That is, if Duval is really mixed up in this affair at all."

"We've got to know mighty soon," retorted Spofford, warmly. "See here! If Frank is in any scrape, luncheon don't amount to much, and school can't count at all! You two get out and rouse the fellows who haven't telephones at their homes. I'll use the instrument. Tell all hands to make a hot line for the gym!"

In less than ten minutes a dozen of the Up and At 'Em Boys were at the gymnasium. Others were arriving with the passage of every minute.

Many were the excuses for absence that reached the public schools and that academy that afternoon. But then, the last half day of school before the Christmas holiday never counts for much in the educational world!

Not that the afternoon's work outside amounted to much.

No trace of Gaston Duval was found, nor any clue to Manley's whereabouts or fate.

The afternoon was passed in feverish efforts by the Up and At 'Em Boys.

Ice hockey was forgotten, or, at least, ignored.

Game time came and went, without the appearance of a single Woodstock Junior on the river.

Still chained and helpless, Frank Manley lay on his back on a sofa of a living room of a farm-house that belonged to people so respectable as to be above the suspicion of any searching party that might set out to explore.

The farmer and his family, unknown to most of the neighbors, had left home for the city over the Christmas holidays.

Manley had lain where he was for hours.

He knew that his three captors were in the next room.

Once in a while one of them stepped into the living-room for a glance at the prisoner.

Not that there was much need to worry about him! Manley was there to stay, beyond any doubt.

It would have been a sheer impossibility to escape.

At length the door opened, and Gaston Duval came in.

A smile of supreme triumphant wickedness hovered on his lips as he looked at Manley.

"Here, all right!" clicked the Creole boy.

Manley regarded him with unwavering eyes.

"You shouldn't have meddled with me—really shouldn't," mocked Duval as he stepped over beside the sofa. "People have tried that before, but something always happens to those who get in my way. It's your turn, now!"

## CHAPTER VI.

### FRANK'S TIGHT FIX.

If Gaston Duval looked for pallor in our hero's face, he was doomed to disappointment.

Instead, the red hue of wrath blazed on Manley's cheeks. His eyes looked unutterable things.



"You really look as if you wanted to talk," laughed Duval. "Perhaps it would do you good to say a few words. At any rate, you shall have the chance."

Bending over, he removed the gag from our hero's mouth with the dexterity of one who had performed such a task before.

"Is this the only way you can fight, Duval?" sneered Manley.

"It's one of my ways," laughed Gaston.

"A coward's way, then."

"My dear fellow, don't waste any time in trying to humiliate me. I am beyond that."

"Wholly beyond that, and shame, I guess," retorted Frank.

"Yes; wholly," assented Gaston, with composure. "It won't do any good to try to rile me, Manley. I never get angry when I hold all the winning cards."

"Do you call this a winning?" retorted our hero. "To hire thugs to down one, and then gloat over him when he can't defend himself? Is that all you know about winning?"

"It's enough in this case."

"Humph! What a poor, weak coward you are! And, for a while, I thought you had sand, even if no principle."

"Principle I never had," laughed Gaston, lightly.

"I believe you—quite."

"It's an awkward thing, and gets in the way."

"Yes—in the way of those who don't care to act like men!"

"All I care about is ruling," smiled Duval. "Even in Woodstock, poor little rural burg that it is, I mean to rule. You didn't have sense enough to abdicate."

"I don't rule Woodstock."

"But you rule the club—that is about the only life in the place. From that club and that little bit of life you tried to shut me out."

"I don't rule even the club, Duval. It is a sort of little republic, in which every member in full standing has his vote."

"You rule, just the same."

"You're wrong; I don't, and I couldn't. True, I have authority as captain of the club, and as coach in the training, but that authority lasts only as long as the other fellows are satisfied. They can vote me out of office any day."

"They will—soon," rejoined Duval, significantly.

"Perhaps."

"More likely you'll resign."

"I shall, at any time when I'm satisfied that I'm not the one to lead."

"Then I am going to convince you," laughed Duval.

He took a turn or two about the room, as if he were deliberating something. Presently he came back.

"Manley," he suggested, coming back to the sofa, "I wonder if you would leave Woodstock at my command? Leave the town for good, I mean?"

"Then you can stop guessing immediately. I wouldn't."

"Not even to escape rather fearful usage?"

"Not for any inducement you can offer!"

The two boys were now looking strongly into each other's eyes.

"Manley, I don't believe you fully realize the gravity of your fix, or what I can do to you if I am so minded."

"I realize," came Frank's firm tone.

"Then you don't believe I'd dare to do much."

"Well, that would depend," jeered Frank. "I shall never again believe that you possess the courage to meet me in a fair and open fight to the end. But I do believe that you have some of the treacherous courage of the wolf. When I am down and helpless you would tear the flesh. But, if we stood face to face, each free and unfettered for the fight, you would cringe and beg like the veriest cur!"

"Pooh!"

"Then put it to the test," sneered Frank. "Free me, so that we can meet on even terms, and then prove that you have the courage to face me!"

"That won't do," came the cold-blooded, laughing answer. "I can't be taunted into throwing up my cards. No, no, Manley! I am going to hold the cards to the end, and you must play your hand as best you can. You have refused to leave Woodstock, as I expected you would. I am going to fix you so that you will be glad to leave the town far behind."

Gaston stepped to the door of the next room, opened it, and called to some one there:

"Bring in the things. I am all ready."

Then entered the same man who had driven the sleigh. In his right hand was the handle of a small furnace of the kind that plumbers use.

With their heads thrust into glowing charcoal were two soldering irons.

At a sign from Duval, the man put the furnace on the floor, not far from the couch.

"That is all," said Gaston, in a low voice. "Now, you can leave the house. I will remain, alone with my friend."

Soon there came the sound of an outer door banging.

"We are alone," smiled Gaston, wickedly. "Alone—you and I and the work before us!"

He paused, for a moment, to examine the fire in the living-room stove.

Then he came back to the couch, seating himself on the edge of it.

"Manley," he remarked, his dark eyes burning like live coals, "do you know what I think gives you your popularity in Woodstock?"

"The opinions of a fellow like you are of very little consequence to me," jeered Manley.

"I'll tell you, nevertheless. In a way you are good looking. It is not the beauty of the thoroughbred; yet, in a coarse and peasant-like way, you are good-looking. Now, I have an idea that, if your good looks were taken from you, your popularity would have a quick death. I'm going to make the experiment."

Again that cold indifference in Manley's eyes. He did not blanch, or shrink. He merely looked inquiringly at his tormentor.

"You see these red-hot irons," went on Duval, lifting one



the cherry-red glow on its head might be seen. He thrust the iron back into the charcoal embers and went on to explain:

"A few long, deep lines across your face, Manley, and you will be badly scared for life. Every trace of your good looks will be gone. Yet I wish to make the job more complete. One eye I shall burn out of the socket. It will add to the hideousness of your looks. And, for your nose, I shall burn the flesh off the tip up to the bone. Oh, with your one remaining eye you will be able to see a rare-looking face reflected in the glass! When the work is well done I will turn you loose, and we shall see whether you will go back to Woodstock? Eh? And, if you do go there, it will be interesting to note how long you will remain there!"

"You'll hardly stay there to note," taunted Manley. "You'll be serving out a life sentence in prison!"

The shot failed.

"On whose evidence?" laughed Duval, lightly. "Hardly on yours, alone. It takes two witnesses to send a man to prison. Besides, do you think me such a fool, Manley, that I've not thought of the simple little matter of having an alibi ready? When you make your charge against me, I'll have several witnesses to bring forward who will swear that I have been miles from here all day long. You forget that I have money, Manley, and that money will buy oaths!"

Then, with a sudden light, almost childish happy laugh, Gaston sprang up from the couch, bent over the furnace and drew out one of the soldering irons.

"At this cherry-red heat, Manley, iron cuts deeper than the smooth, sharp edge of a razor. See how easily it will do it."

In a spirit of pure bravado, Duval applied the hot iron to the cords that bound Manley's ankles.

There was a smell of smouldering rope in the air, and Frank's feet were free.

"Lest you should feel tempted to try to use those feet," warned Gaston Duval, "I will inform you that the first move to employ your feet against me will be punished by thrusting a red-hot iron into your stomach. Be on your good behavior!"

Duval flourished the soldering iron by way of emphasis.

Then, noting that the end was cooling, he bent to thrust it back into the charcoal glow.

Turning, he started to stand up straight.

He was not quick enough to dodge.

Flop!

Whack!

Frank Manley had staked all on the die.

With hardly a chance in ten in his favor, he had thrown himself, feet first, through the air, aiming a kick with one foot at Gaston's jaw-bone.

Down went Duval to the floor, on the verge of unconsciousness.

After him rolled Manley, with the swift, lithe movement of the panther.

Both his legs Frank got around the neck of the young wretch.

Right then and there Duval began to strangle.

Manley's right leg clung tightly around his enemy's neck at the left. Our hero's left knee was pressing forcefully against the left side of Gaston's chin and jugular, shutting off the breath of life.

"Let up! Stop it! I give up!" choked Duval, feebly, after making a desperate but unsuccessful effort to free himself with his hands.

"Duval," sounded Manley's voice, in cold, deadly warning, "listen to me. You must have the key to the handcuffs on my wrists."

"I haven't!"

"Then there's no help for you. You must die!"

Steadily and relentlessly Manley applied that fearful strangling pressure.

"If you struggle too hard," went on Manley's cold voice, "I shall be forced to make a turn with my body. If I make a quarter turn to the right the strain will break your neck."

With a stifled groan of terror, Duval ceased struggling.

"If you suddenly discover that you really have the key, Duval, you will be able to save your life."

"Yes; I have it!"

"Then use it quickly, before it is too late!"

"Let me go, and I will."

"No; you must free my hands before I free your neck!"

"I can't reach your hands, Manley."

"Then you are doomed to die of strangulation."

"Let go of me, and I give you my word of honor——"

"Your word of honor? Rot!"

"Manley, you are choking me to death!" came the appealing warning, in the very little that was now left of Duval's voice.

"I'm forced to do it, in self-defence. Reach my hands and free them, or I can grant you no relief!"

Quickly and nervously Duval fumbled upward, trying to reach the handcuffs.

Frank let up on the choking a trifle, though not enough to give Duval any chance of wriggling out of this death grip.

Click!

The lock was open at last. Frank wrenched his hands apart.

Then, quickly, the young athlete increased the choking pressure again, watching Gaston's face.

When the fellow was all but unconscious, Frank let go on the pressure altogether, sprang away, and then hurled himself once more on his enemy, pinning him to the floor.

Then Frank felt for the cord that he usually carried in his hip pocket. It had not been taken from him.

Quickly and deftly he bound Duval, then tied a second cord to his wrists as a sort of leading rope.

"You see," mocked Frank, "that sometimes it is possible for a fellow who knows jiu-jitsu to fight without the use of his hands."

"I was a fool!" grunted Duval.

"You have been, all along, in trying to run things on a crooked basis. I don't see what pleasure you expect to find in Woodstock after this. We were prepared to receive you



as a good fellow, and you would have enjoyed yourself. Now, what is there ahead of you?"

Duval did not answer.

Glancing outdoors at the light, and then at his watch, Manley suddenly uttered:

"Four o'clock! Gracious! And you've kept me from the hockey practice on the day before the match! Well, you won't keep me here much longer. I suppose you have an overcoat. Where is it?"

"In the next room."

Frank secured his own cap, which lay at the foot of the couch, then ordered:

"Come along!"

"Where?"

"To Woodstock, of course!"

"I am not going in any such plight as this!" cried Duval, quickly.

"Oh, yes, you are!"

"You enjoy humiliating me, don't you?" choked Gaston.

"Well," retorted Frank, ironically, "considering what you had proposed doing to me, you have a remarkably delicate sense of consideration!"

"Why are you taking me to Woodstock?"

"Because you belong there."

"But why in this plight?"

"That's my own affair," returned our hero, curtly. "From now on, Duval, you have forfeited all especial claim to my consideration."

"I won't go!"

"You'll be sorry if you refuse."

Frank applied a pressure to Gaston's "funny-bone" that made the sorry youth wince with indescribable and unbearable pain.

"I've got worse things than that, if you are stubborn," smiled Manley. "Now, come into the next room with me and we'll see if we can find your overcoat."

The garment was found without trouble. Of course Gaston's arms could not be thrust into the sleeves, but the garment was thrown over his shoulders and buttoned under his chin. Then his hat was placed on his head.

"You made another mistake in allowing your friends to go away so soon," mocked Manley, as he started his compulsory companion toward the outer door.

Frank had recognized his surroundings at the first glance out of doors. They were some four miles from Woodstock, the road that ran by the farm leading into the river road.

"Now, as you're something of an athlete," jibed Manley, "prove your powers by stepping along briskly."

They left the lonely farm-house, turned into the deserted road, and trudged onward.

"You might be generous," ventured Duval, after they had gone some distance.

"I mean to be, in my own way, but not in yours," Frank retorted.

Duval lapsed into moody silence as they tramped along. He would have thrown himself down in the snow, refusing to move, but he well knew that Manley had means of making him go onward.

It was dark when they reached the river road.

"You might let up on me, now," urged Duval, again. "You've had your fun."

"You must realize," crisped our hero, "that you're not running this expedition. Here's somebody coming in a sleigh. Get close to me, if you don't want your fix discovered."

In this way they passed the sleigh, without either the man or the woman in it noting anything out of the way.

"Some one else coming," muttered Frank, peering ahead through the darkness. "Why, I believe it's some of our fellows!"

In another moment Manley knew it was. He signaled, bringing Hal, Joe, Jackets and five or six of the other fellows forward on the jump.

"Looking for me?" asked Frank, innocently. "I've been spending the day in the country."

"But this—this——" began Hal, nodding at the sullen Duval.

"He?" smiled Frank. "Oh, he's been with me!"

In as few words as he could, our hero told what had happened. Duval did not take the trouble to deny, though he was careful not to admit.

The Up and At 'Em Boys regarded the captive with dark looks.

"Joe," requested Frank, "I wish you and Foster would trudge over to the Nichols farm. Put out the fire in the sitting-room stove, and then notify the nearest neighbors that the house has been entered in the owner's absence. Perhaps, though, you'd better take some of the fellows with you. Duval's friends may return to the house. You want to have force enough with you."

Then, turning to Gaston Duval, and freeing his hands, our hero pointed ahead, remarking:

"There's Woodstock ahead. You may go there, if you like. Do try to behave yourself, though, if you stay in the town!"

## CHAPTER VII.

### FRANK AND TOD AT THE FACE-OFF.

Out on the river a rink whose ice was as smooth as men and a scraper could make it!

On shore, Hek Owen's great tent, board-floored and heated by two huge wood stoves!

Something like a hundred yards to the left of the tent was the Butler summer cottage, which the Up and At 'Em Boys had just succeeded in securing as a winter clubhouse for ice sports.

The clubs, each composed of three dozen young Americans, all healthy and loving outdoor sport.

Add to this a crowd of hundreds who had come to see a great game of that kingly ice sport, hockey!

There are the ingredients for an afternoon of rare pleasure.

It was Saturday, and one o'clock, and half an hour more, in the afternoon.



Both tent and clubhouse were open to all of the public who cared to enter.

Out on the ice stood the rink, deserted and neglected, save for the watchful guardianship of the man who had cleared the ice.

This year the rink had been boarded in with side and end walls eight inches high—this that scientific carom playing might be indulged in.

Just a foot and a half beyond the walls were the ropes that were to hold the spectators back.

At this very moment, in upstairs rooms of the clubhouse, the players and substitutes for the two teams were finishing their dressing.

Hek Owen, Tod's father, and "patron saint" of the Bradford club, was, as usual, wandering between the dressing rooms, sizing up the players on both sides.

"I believe you beat us last year," grinned Hek, stopping in front of Manley.

"Why, my recollection is something to that effect," Frank smiled back at him.

"Yes; it was eight to six," assented Hek. "But this year? What are your plans as to winning?"

"Same as ever," replied Frank, quickly. "We're going to win."

"Well—maybe," nodded Hek. "But you know Bradford is playing a different sort of game this year."

"Bradford will have to, to stand any show," grinned Joe.

"What do you say, Spofford?" appealed Hek, suddenly. "You so seldom have an opinion that it's always worth listening to."

"We're going to win," returned Hal, quietly.

"That settles it!" clicked Joe.

"I guess it does," agreed Hek. "As far as just talking can settle anything."

Frank had made up his team as strongly as he could. He had a much wider range of material to pick from this year than he had had last year. He had made up the team in this wise:

Left center, Manley; right center, Humphrey; right wing, Spofford; left wing, Prescott; cover point, Hollister; point, McGuire; goal, Everett.

Tod's line-up for Bradford was:

Left center, Owen; right center, Hopnak; right wing, Leeson; left wing, Basecomb; cover point, Shirley; point, Evans; goal, Distleigh.

Parsons was to referee, and there were two umpires and a timekeeper.

Friday afternoon and evening there had been a thaw, but Saturday had come on cold again, yet there was no wind.

The result was that the ice was in fine condition, and the conditions just right. Inshore, the ice was a trifle thin, but the crowd had been cautioned as to that.

And now, at a quarter before two, a great yell went up as the members of the two teams came out in a mass.

Spectators crowded out after them, though some of the more cautious decided to remain where it was warm until play actually began.

Skates went on with despatch and precision. The players

skimmed off over the ice outside the rink, intent on warming up.

Frank and Hal were together, skating down the ice toward the bend above Woodstock.

"By the great Dewey—look at that!" uttered Hal, suddenly.

Frank looked. Gaston Duval, just rounding the bend, was coming toward them.

"Some people always have their nerve with them!" muttered Hal, disgustedly, and not caring whether his voice carried over the ice or not.

Duval looked at them steadily and coolly, as he skated by them.

Neither young athlete accorded him any recognition.

"I had an idea he'd want to keep away from Woodstock," grumbled Hal. "A fellow with any pride would, after what happened to him."

"You forget that very few know what did happen," hinted our hero.

That was the truth. Few knew anything about Manley's adventure with the newcomer. The Up and At 'Em Boys had a way of their own of not telling all they knew.

On their way back up the ice they encountered Tod, skating slowly toward them. The three stopped on the ice for a little chat.

"I see that Duval can't keep away," grinned Tod.

"It would be expecting too much of one with his colossal cheek," uttered Hal, impatiently.

"I'm sorry I couldn't stop him from punching me so the other day," mused Tod. "But he thumped me, good and fair, and I didn't believe there was a fellow around here who could do it, unless, possibly, yourself, Manley. So he hasn't tackled you yet?"

Frank smiled, but did not reply.

"I was almost hoping he would take a try at you," Tod went on. "That is, if you can really finish him. But he's a dangerous man with his fists."

"I don't want to fight him," said Manley, shortly. "I've been in altogether too many fights to suit me, as it is. Unless Duval walks on both my feet I shall keep out of trouble with him."

"But if he does try to walk too hard on you," grinned Tod, appreciatively, "I want to be there to see."

"And I hope there won't be anything to see. We might, at least, let our Christmas season get by without brawling. Not that I mean to say that you did any brawling, Tod; for I don't believe you fought without strong provocation."

"Oh, I had it all right," nodded Owen. "But say! Dad was disgusted. He has made me put on the mitts twice a day ever since."

"Well, let's talk about something more manly than Duval—the game, for instance."

"That will be manly, if I can have my way," returned Tod. "I've tried hard to impress upon every fellow that we can't play any such slugging game as we did last year. I believe that every fellow is with me, except, perhaps, Leeson. He's nothing but a big brute. I wish we didn't need him, but his strength makes him a valuable fellow in al-



most any game. But I've told Leeson that, if he doesn't behave to-day, I'll make it my personal affair to see that he's well thrashed."

"Wanted!" chirped Hal, as the referee's warning whistle sounded over the ice. "Now, for a fast, furious, brilliant game!"

The crowd parted, cheering, as the fourteen young players tried to get through to the ice.

"Woodstock!"

"Bradford!"

"Some one will have to be disappointed," laughed Manley.

It brought a laugh.

Frank, glancing at the crowd, saw Duval close to the rope on the right.

Their eyes met. In Manley's glance there was no recognition. Duval's look was a steady stare, cool, insolent and devil-may care.

Frank read in that look of a threat of resumed hostilities, and turned away with a tremor of disgust and almost of nausea.

Up the rink there was something far more worth looking at—the brightly capped members of the Girls' Club, who were there to see their own youngsters win.

Choice of goals was made. The skaters glided to their places.

What a rousing cheer went up!

For Tod and Frank were at the center for the face-off, the tiny little rubber puck resting between their sticks.

A tense moment, and then——

"Play!"

Another, lighter cheer went up as Frank secured the rubber.

Like a flash, Frank was out to the right with it.

Pass! The puck shot diagonally across the ice to Hal, who darted in and got it.

Two forwards and Bradford's cover-point made for Spofford, who was going sharply down the ice with it.

Hal's quick look saw Tod in the way of his projected move. Spofford did a daring thing that oft brings disaster. He lifted the puck, passing it fairly over Tod's stick. The rubber went skimming over the ice, to be met by Joe, who soon had it.

They were past cover-point, and, in a twinkling, Joe had sailed around point.

Then across the ice to Hal, who sent it spinning.

There were too many of Distleigh's own players in his line of view.

Over the ice came the puck, with its swift whizz.

Too late, Distleigh saw it. He made a desperate move with his stick, and missed.

Goal! In twenty-eight seconds!

Then, indeed, did the cheering break loose!

But Referee Parsons had the puck already. He announced the obvious decision and hurriedly set the puck for the next face-off.

Once more Frank got the rubber, but Joe, in a tight place, fumbled.

Then the puck began to travel toward the Woodstock goal.

From side to side it passed, the Bradford forwards doing some very pretty work.

Once Manley darted in and stopped it, but lost on a pass to Hal, and once more the fight went on toward Woodstock's posts.

Leeson, blocking roughly against Joe, got the rubber behind point, skated three yards with it, and made a clean drive for goal.

But Bob Everett's stick turned it to the right.

Then the fast skaters carried it over the goal line and behind.

"Touchdown!" cried Everett, in pretended excitement. "Take it out for the kick!"

That proved too much for Tod's gravity. Laughing, he lost the puck.

Leeson, with a face red with laughter, missed his opportunity.

Swiftly down the rink went Manley, flanked by Hal and Joe, while Humphrey, keenly alert, came behind Manley.

More zig-zagging, and then, just as it came to Manley, he pretended to go to the right with the puck, but lifted his stick ever so little.

Humphrey had the rubber, a feint, which the enemy were slow to see in a game where a second counts!

Bradford's defense veered to its own left.

Humphrey went sufficiently to his own left to send the rubber spinning to Joe, who promptly drove for a goal.

Another goal, one minute and forty-four seconds.

Distleigh was fuming!

"That football gibberish was a good one," grinned Tod, as the two captains met for the third face-off. "But it won't catch us again."

Frank smiled. He had planned this on purpose to "rattle" his opponents.

On this third time the puck fell to Tod's lot.

And now Leeson began to play a rough game, indeed, for he had not shone with gentler tactics.

Once, as Joe came toward him with the puck, Leeson blocked him so heavily as to make it brutal.

Joe fell, landing on an elbow, and got up much the worse for ruffled temper.

"Stupid!" roared Tod, at his own man.

Yet Leeson mixed things at the next contact, throwing Humphrey heavily.

"You fool!" hissed Captain Owen. "Stop it!"

The referee, seeing that Captain Owen was fully awake to the offense, failed to interfere officially.

But "rough house" won that goal.

Leeson protested that it had all been accidental, and that he had collided in the heat of play.

Tod took him one side, muttering in his ear:

"It won't do, Leeson, I tell you. I am on to the whole trick. Why? Because I played that sort of game myself before I developed a slight sense of honor. Now, no more of this!"



Leeson, thereupon, played more gently, except when he could be rough without positive proof.

The first half closed with four goals to three—in favor of Bradford.

Then the skaters left the rink for the ten minutes' intermission.

Old Hek was looking decidedly placid, yet a trifle expectant.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE SCIENCE OF CAROM HOCKEY.

"Leeson, are you a bit of a gentleman, or a heavy-fisted loafer?"

"What do you mean?" demanded Bradford's right wing, flushing.

"You know well enough what I mean," flared Tod. "You're a disgrace to us. There are Manley's fellows, all playing a cool, swift, scientific game, like real sportsmen. And here you are, blocking like a battering-ram."

"Blocking is allowed under the rules," growled Leeson, defiantly.

"Yes, when it's rightly done; but slugging is barred. The referee would have ruled you off the ice if he hadn't seen that I was trying to keep you in line."

"We've won more games than the other fellows, so far."

"I don't want a game that isn't decently won," snapped Tod. "If you can't play a gentleman's game, admit it and get off the ice."

"I have tried not to be rough. But in the heat of play——"

"That won't wash here," broke in Tod. "I understand that dodge, for I used to think myself that it was the way to play. Now, I won't have it."

"All right," nodded Leeson. "If I see a Woodstock fellow coming toward me, I'll apologize and step out of his way."

Tod's eyes flashed disagreeably, but he skated off with a warning:

"I don't ask this as any favor, Leeson. It's an order from your captain."

Frank had no directions to give his men during the intermission. The afternoon's work had been well rehearsed that forenoon.

So our hero and Hal, moving out of the rink, had skated around to where the girls stood on their skates.

On the shore, unofficial chaperon for all the members of the Girls' Club, stood Mr. Dunstan, smoking his almost inevitable cigar and caring little or nothing about the game.

"There's Duval, looking hard this way," whispered Kitty, presently.

Frank turned to look contemptuously at the fellow.

"He won't annoy us to-day," said Kitty, in a confident undertone. "He wouldn't run the risk of a snub before the crowd, and with papa at hand."

"He would better not try it at any time," gritted Frank. "That's one of the few things he could do that would make me attempt to break his head."

Duval, however, smiled a trifle insolently as Frank glided past him at the call for the players.

Once he had seen Manley step inside the rink, Duval, with a slow glide on his skates, started over toward Miss Dunstan.

But he changed his mind, going off on the other skate, as he saw several Up and At 'Em Boys, headed by Sato and Dick Gaylord, approaching the girls.

Frank, who, with a quickly uttered word to Gaylord, had provided for this guard, went back upon the rink with an easy mind.

"Play!"

As the word ripped out, Frank took the puck from Tod, whirling to the right with it.

Carefully calculating his shot, Manley whizzed the rubber against the side board.

It struck, then rebounded at an angle.

Dashing ahead, Manley got the puck again, twelve feet at least, out from the board, and just as Bascomb, sure of it, had struck beyond it.

Then down the ice went the forwards.

Bradford's defense hurried to the fray.

Another carom, and Manley had the puck where he wanted it.

He drove straight for goal, but Distleigh, this time, was not to be caught napping.

Then the ball went behind Bradford's goal line, outside the posts.

There some lively scrimmaging resulted, but this style of play scores but seldom.

Tod got the puck at last, and down the rink Bradford's four forwards went, almost in a straight line.

But Woodstock's own forwards had scurried along at the side.

Hollister failed, but McGuire got the puck on an attempted slide, and drove neatly against a side board.

It rebounded, coming neatly to the stick of Frank Manley, who had signaled the play.

Then down the rink it went, from side to side, with Hal and Joe caroming and passing, and with Manley between them to direct and to take the rubber at need.

Bradford, fighting hard and swiftly, did its best to intercept.

But this scientific caroming puzzled and bewildered Owen's boys.

Both Hal and Joe seemed to know, to a nicety, just where the ball, when driven against the boards, would rebound.

Bradford's boys tried to judge, yet failed in nearly every instance.

Hek Owen, looking on intently, wrinkled his forehead in perplexity.

"It's a new wrinkle to do the thing so finely," he muttered. "Manley's youngsters do it as well as if they had practiced on a billiard table."

And, indeed, they did do it splendidly. What had started



out to be a stubborn, hard-fought game, was won in a trifle more than two minutes.

Then, with a change of goals, Frank decided to work the carom again.

Once more he succeeded in getting the puck at the face-off. He drove it to Hal, who caromed.

Tod and Bascomb, watching, dove after Hal.

But Spofford deliberately fooled them, skating wide of where the rubber slid.

It was Manley who darted in and took the puck, forcing it over to Joe.

Then down the rink it went, until Joe turned to send it to Frank.

But he drove to Hal, instead, who caught the rattled Distleigh napping, and once more the rubber slid through between the goal posts.

Woodstock onlookers were cheering wildly now.

This scientific caroming, by which Frank's players could seem to bring the puck out wherever it was wanted, and this silent, indistinguishable signaling by which the play was directed, was a revelation in ice hockey.

"We can't do anything with that, and we look like fools," growled Leeson to himself. "Now, I guess Tod will be glad enough to have me take things a little my own way."

He tried his slugging tactics in the next game, downing Hal in a rough collision.

But Humphrey adroitly slipped into Hal's place, leaving Spofford to play, momentarily, the position of right center.

With five minutes to play, the score stood eight goals to five—now in Woodstock's favor.

"Might as well stop playing, Tod," shouted one good-natured guy.

But Tod shook his head, passed whispered directions, and Bradford went in and won the next goal by good, solid playing of the old-fashioned kind.

But Manley, with another display of caroming, and the most brilliant of the afternoon, won the last goal, with a score of nine to six.

Then how the small boys, who played "shinny," and who had been the most eager spectators, cheered!

They had learned a new wrinkle. There would be no more open rinks on the ice that winter! Every small boy voted for the boundary boards and a vast amount of practice at caroming!

"Last year it was eight to six. Well, you went us one better this year," admitted Hek, half-sheepishly, as Frank skated over and stood beside the old man.

Yet all the while Frank's eyes were in Kitty's direction, for Duval stood on his skates, barely a hundred feet from Miss Dunstan.

Frank went over to her, chatted, and then escorted her to the shore, where Mr. Dunstan and the carriage were waiting.

Then, easy in his mind, our hero skated slowly down toward the grounds of the clubhouse, where perhaps a hundred people lingered on shore.

Joe, sitting himself on a bench on the edge of the ice, had just taken off his skates.

As he looked up he saw Gaston Duval, who had just taken off his skates and laid them on the ice, looking at him mockingly.

Hot blood always went quickly to Joe's head.

Dropping his own skates, and heedless of the crowd, he strode over to the newcomer in Woodstock.

"What's the matter?" asked Joe, bluntly. "Were you thinking that you'd like to kick me again?"

"I haven't a doubt that it would do you good," retorted Duval, smiling maliciously.

"Try it, then!" suggested Joe.

Without an instant's hesitation, and still smiling, Duval aimed a kick with his right foot.

With his left hand Joe caught the foot, just as he had done on another occasion.

And Duval, just as quickly, threw himself over to land on his hands, intending to kick upward with his left foot at Joe's face.

It had worked all right, that other time, but now it worked differently.

For Joe, with his right hand, gripped, like a flash, the toe of Duval's captured right foot.

Just as Duval tried to throw his whole body over to the left, Joe gave the fellow's foot a violent twist to the other side.

It spoiled the throw.

And, instead of landing on his hands, Duval sat down!

He sat down harder than he had ever done before in his life, and with such force that the rather thin ice cracked under him.

It gave way, and Duval sat in water instead of on ice—sat there almost doubled up, and in a hard fix to extricate himself.

As he struggled to get up out of his wet seat, the ice cracked ominously. A little further into the water went the doubled-up fellow.

But Joe, with a very broad grin, stepped ashore.

With derisive chuckles and roars of laughter, the witnesses of this queer event looked on, but none rushed forward to extend a helping hand.

Cursing under his breath, Duval floundered more and more, breaking more ice.

He was wet almost from head to foot when he finally pulled himself out of that hole in the ice, and a madder youth, it is safe to say, never faced a delighted, grinning crowd.

Duval picked up his skates, then looked at the clubhouse, with its warmth and cheer. He could not go in there.

Then over at the tent. But that was the property of Hek Owen. The feud with Tod barred him out there.

His face white with shame and anger, Gaston Duval seated himself, and, with fingers almost perishing with cold, fastened on his skates.

Then, in garments that had already begun to freeze in the biting air, he turned and skated toward Woodstock.

Truly, his kind found cold comfort in Woodstock!

Inside the clubhouse Joe was saying to Manley, and to others who stood around:



"I couldn't help giving him that chance, Frank. You didn't want me to fight, so I had to get square without fighting. Am I square?"

"You are!" came back the delighted answer.

"Say," chuckled Joe, "how funny the chap did look, doubled up in that air-hole of his own making, and sitting in a whole riverful of water!"

"But how did you happen to think of that style of defense?" chuckled Manley.

"Oh, it was a little hint from Sato as to the best way of meeting Duval's la cravatte trick."

"La savatte, you mean, don't you?" hinted Frank.

"No; I guess it was la cravatte," insisted grinning Joe. "Only that ice must have made a cold cravatte, and our friend wore it rather low down!"

Dick Foster thrust an envelope into Manley's hand.

"An elderly gentleman in a carriage asked me to hand you this," explained Foster. "Then he drove off."

Manley tore open the envelope. He read the note inclosed, and, as he did so, his eyes opened wide.

"Fellows," he choked, happily, "that ice hockey game brought us luck, indeed."

"What?" chorused a dozen at once, and the gaze of every eye was fastened on him.

But Manley smiled provokingly as he answered:

"Oh, I forgot. I mustn't say a word about this until Christmas morning. Be here, all hands, at eleven o'clock Christmas morning. That's all!"

## CHAPTER IX.

### CHRISTMAS MORNING IN WOODSTOCK.

Frank was awake before daylight on that Christmas morning.

He slipped directly out of the house with his skates, in order that his mother might have a long nap before coming down to set out the few little simple gifts that she would make.

For Frank had stipulated that her gifts to him must be simple, and had told her that he would offer but some little simple thing to her.

And the deceitful rascal had, hidden away in his room, with the door now securely locked, a set of furs for his mother that had made a considerable hole in his savings.

Hal was waiting for him at the ice. The two youngsters skated until nearly half-past seven.

Then they went home.

Frank slipped upstairs, after hearing his mother moving in the dining-room. He threw the handsome furs over his arm, and stole downstairs again.

"Merry Christmas, mother!" he hailed, stepping into the room.

But he was more staggered than she was.

For there, by the table, stood a perfect surveying transit, and beside it a levelling instrument.

A levelling rod stood in the corner, while beflagged markers and a surveyor's steel tape were on the table.

"Is that a simple gift, mother?" demanded Frank, almost sternly.

"Is that?" Mrs. Manley asked, glancing at the handsome furs with wet eyes.

She knew that this gift had cost her son as much as her own generosity and love had cost her.

Frank had wanted this surveying outfit for a long time, for it fitted in with his chosen career as a civil engineer.

But first he assisted Mrs. Manley to try on her furs. Then he went over to inspect his own treasures.

They were of the finest, and bore the trade-mark of the best supply house in the country in that line.

"There was another package left here for you last evening," smiled his mother.

From the hand-bag hanging from a nearby chair, she took a little parcel and handed it to him.

It was addressed in Kitty Dunstan's handwriting.

Mrs. Manley hastily stepped into the kitchen, on some forgotten errand, while Frank sank weakly into a chair.

His fingers trembled as he broke the string. A box that he opened, and something well wrapped in tissue paper.

The gleam of gold, and Frank almost dropped the something as he found it to be a gold watch.

"The poor, foolish girl, throwing her allowance away on me," choked Frank, as he held his breath and the watch at the same time.

He opened the back of the watch to look at the works—and there was the photographed face of Kitty Dunstan.

It was smiling at him with that teasing, tantalizing, mischievous look that he loved best to see in her eyes.

And now the quick rush of tears to his own eyes blurred out the vision for a few moments.

Then, brushing away the tears with a few hasty dabs, he took another look at the splendid likeness.

Right then and there Kitty Dunstan's face was made momentarily moist by the imprinting of a very reverent kiss.

"Mother," he called, huskily, "did you see this?"

But as she came in Frank hastily slipped into his pocket an accompanying card on which had been daintily penned a few precious words.

"Yes; and I almost forgot another little package," hastened on Mrs. Manley, rummaging once more in the hand-bag.

She brought forth another small package.

Frank opened it quickly. The treasure proved to be a gold chain and locket, from which hung a card on which was written:

"With the proffered friendship of John Dunstan, in the hope that it may prove to be of as good metal as this little token."

Then, indeed, Frank was very silent for a few moments, but he looked up to ask:

"Mother, do you believe there was ever before quite such a Christmas as this?"

John Dunstan, whom our hero often fancied did not



and the intimacy between the young people, had supplemented his daughter's handsome gift.

Truly, the microbes of happiness and generosity circulated thickly in the Christmas air!

Then, too, there were little gifts from Hal, and Joe, and Jackets, and a curious bit of carved ivory from Sato.

There was, too, a pair of racing skates from the club as a whole, and these were encased in a handsome leather bag that bore Manley's initials in silver.

"Mother," cried Frank, jumping up suddenly, "this watch tells me that it is time for breakfast. There's a lot to do to-day."

Then Nora came in with the breakfast. Rarely had Manley eaten with more appetite, or with less knowledge as to what the meal really consisted of.

And then came Hal, and the quick walk over to Jackets' house, for the little athlete was to lend them his pony and sleigh for the trip up to the Dunstan house.

For Grace Scott, who was an orphan, was to be there, too, on this great Christmas day.

Frank and Hal carried identical gifts to their respective sweethearts—a pair of skates, silver plated and gold embossed, in leather bags, initialed in silver.

No one knew how many weeks Hal had been engaged in saving up for Christmas.

And, as a joint gift to Mr. Dunstan, they carried that for which he was likely to have much use—the finest cigar case they had been able to find.

Frank had borne nearly all of the cost of this gift, but had insisted that this was to be a secret confined to the two chums.

"My gift seems pretty poor, after all, compared with hers," muttered Frank, as they drove up the hill.

"Gifts can be compared only by the feeling that is behind them," rejoined Hal, and then added, in his practical way:

"Besides, there's a very big difference between the Dunstan and the Manley incomes."

"There won't always be!" uttered Frank, quickly.

"I believe you," retorted Hal, loyally enough. "That is, until the Manley income goes away ahead of the Dunstan."

Hal, himself, was carrying in his lower right-hand vest pocket a photograph of Grace, inclosed in a locket, from which ran to a buttonhole a fine, dainty golden strand of chain.

It was a merry enough Christmas, in spirit and fact, when the young people met at the big house up on the hill.

Mr. Dunstan promptly departed to the library to fill his case with cigars, and left the young people together.

Quite naturally, of course, Hal and Grace took a little promenade in the broad, long, softly carpeted hallway.

This left Manley alone with his sweetheart.

"Kit," said Frank, very softly, "I don't know how to thank you sufficiently, and I don't know just how to reproach you for your extravagance. You've made a sad, big hole in your allowance, and——"

"My allowance, my dear, is given to me in the expecta-

tion that I will find happiness in my own way with it. Take my word for it, Frank, that I've enjoyed myself this time more than I ever did before."

Frank opened the back of his treasured watch and eyed the photograph.

"That's just the way I like to see you look. It's the way I always try to picture you when I'm away from you," he murmured, fondly.

"So you told me once. Frank, I had a fearful time trying to get just that expression at the photographer's."

Her laugh rang out merrily.

"I am afraid I shall wear the case out looking at this picture whenever I'm away from Woodstock," he went on, presently.

"Perhaps I had some purpose in being photographed just the way you like to see me," Kitty went on, presently. "More than the mere matter of pleasing you, I mean."

"Then what purpose?" Frank asked, looking up suddenly.

"Frank, my dear, there will be many a day when you will be away from Woodstock, and from—me. When you're out in the world there'll be many a temptation such as every young man away from home meets. Then, Frank, oh, my dear, every time you find the path twisted, look at those smiling, confident eyes, will you, and take a thought of the girl who pins her whole heart's faith to your clear, simple, upright manhood!"

## CHAPTER X.

### THE LUCK THAT HOCKEY BROUGHT.

Was there ever before such a Christmas?

Gladness was in the keen, frosty air as Manley turned Jackets' pony out through the Dunstan gate and drove rapidly toward Woodstock.

For there was yet much to be done.

At eleven o'clock there was the appointment with the Up and At 'Em Boys to be kept at the Butler cottage, which served as the winter clubhouse during the season of winter sports.

As soon as the pony had been stabled, Frank and Hal hurried to the gym.

They found it deserted.

"Guess all the fellows are up at the clubhouse," laughed Hal.

"We'll be there on time," nodded Frank.

"You might tell me what it is all about," hinted Hal, curiously.

"That's a suggestion—not a command," smiled Frank.

Hal looked inquiringly at his chum, but Manley's air made it plain that no revelation was to be expected yet.

"It would only spoil the surprise," said Frank, a moment later.

He and Hal were in the locker-room, busily getting into their hockey rigs.



Then they sallied out and down to the ice, where they adjusted their skates.

The very sensation of motion on that fine, sunshiny morning was exhilarating.

Frank and Hal made almost record speed up the river. As they turned the bend, a dozen of their fellows on the ice caught sight of them and set up a shout.

"Here they come!"

"Whoop!"

With a wild rush the young skaters bore down upon them, then circled around their captain and lieutenant.

"What's up, Frank?"

"Tell us now!"

Frank eyed them with that provoking, tantalizing smile of his.

"There's nothing to tell," he announced, soberly.

"What?"

"There's nothing to tell?"

"Did you get mixed on dates? This ain't April first!"

"There's nothing to tell," repeated Manley.

Then, breaking into a laugh, he added:

"But there may be something to see in a little while."

"Tell us what it is!"

"Fellows, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas!"

"Was that what you got us away up here for?" asked one disappointed voice.

It raised a laugh, in which Manley joined.

"Fellows," said Hal, severely, "I'm ashamed of you! Did you ever know Frank to tell a thing until he got ready to tell it?"

"Bet you know!" challenged Dick Foster.

"No; I don't—honest!"

"Bet you tried to find out, then!"

Hal laughed, coloring.

"Better come into the clubhouse, fellows," suggested Manley, making for the shore.

Nearly all the rest of the fellows were waiting on the porch. A few of the cooler ones had waited inside.

"You can call the roll," laughed Joe, as our hero entered. "You won't find any of the sheep lost."

"Wish you all a Merry Christmas," smiled Frank.

Then that provoking captain took a seat near one of the windows.

There was a long pause, spent in wondering silence.

"Well?" demanded a voice at last.

It voiced the sentiments of all.

"Nothing doing yet," declared Frank, sitting loungingly at ease.

"But——"

"When there is, I'll take you all into my confidence."

Joe grinned at the rest.

There was no use in being impatient. Manley was certain not to speak until the time came.

"Let's sing something," suggested Everett.

It raised a laugh, for Everett possessed about the worst singing voice in the club.

So the youngsters "marked time" as best they could,

some going into other rooms in order to hide their impatience and curiosity.

Still Manley gazed abstractedly out of the window.

By and by Cranston rushed in.

"There's a truck coming up to the door!" he cried. "Has that anything to do with the secret?"

"It won't be a secret much longer," smiled Frank, as he threw open the door.

Two teamsters staggered in, bearing Manley's splendid gift to the merry Up and At 'Em Boys.

Then what a roar went up.

The two teamsters grinned at the youngsters, then, as Manley handed each a little cash reminder of the day, they turned to depart.

"I don't suppose any of you can find any tools with which to open the box?" laughed Frank.

Couldn't they?

There was such a rush for the door to get into the skate repair room that the mass of boys got jammed in the doorway.

"Appoint a committee of two to go after the tools," suggested Manley, laughingly. "It will save time."

Then, as a hammer and a chisel were brought, Frank took them, observing:

"You would better let me open the box, for I have an idea what's in it."

Whack! whack! whack!

"It's something heavy, anyway," observed Joe, as all clustered around. "Did you see how the truckmen staggered under it?"

"Or else Manley told 'em to stagger," suggested Foster, sagaciously.

Frank merely smiled, teasingly.

Ah! One board of the lid was off. How they crowded around.

Pshaw! Nothing but a lot of wrapping paper stood revealed.

Still working slowly, their young captain removed the lid, board by board.

It was off, now, and still all they could see was a mass of wrapping paper.

Frank stood erect, facing the eager throng.

"Before we go any further," he suggested, "a few remarks are in order."

"Oh!"

"Aw!"

"G'wan!"

"No speech—nothing else!" came Manley's firm ultimatum.

"Speech, then!"

"But make it short!"

"All I have to say," retorted Manley, quizzically, "is that this isn't exactly a gift to the club—that is, not collectively. There are in this box thirty-six articles, all as nearly exactly alike as they could be made. One will be handed to each member of the club. Now, then, to prevent any unseemly rush, form in line—single file! There won't be any distribution until that line is formed."



There was a scramble for place. Hal led the line, with Joe just behind.

"Step up, Hal!"

As Spofford came up, Manley rummaged down under the paper. He drew forth something and handed it to his chum.

Quickly Spofford began to tear at the wrappings.

"Here, Joe."

"Why, it's a pocketbook!" hailed Hal.

"So it is!" from Joe.

"And—jimminy!"

Hal had opened his wallet to find reposing inside, a new, crisp-looking bank-note.

In a jiffy he had it out.

"Ten dollars!"

There was a roar—almost a panic.

"Steady, there, with that line!" commanded Frank, sharply, as, working like a beaver, he served the gifts with all possible speed.

The last package of all—the thirty-sixth—he appropriated for himself.

There was no disappointments and no favorites.

Every boy, as soon as he got his wallet open, found the same kind of a ten-dollar bill.

"Explanation!" shouted Joe.

"What's the answer?"

"Now, lug on that speech! We can listen now."

"Fellows," Frank went on, slowly, "nominally, this is my gift to the club. It was so ordered. Yet all this munificence has cost me has been the labor of cashing a check, buying the wallets and stuffing a bank-note in each."

"But that's no explanation," insisted Al Adams.

"The only further explanation must come from reading a note that I received here, just after the game, Saturday. I'll read that note now."

From a pocket, Manley drew a folded paper and read:

"Captain Manley: To-night a check will reach you at your store. It will come from an old man who has missed nearly everything good in life, health included, through too much attention to amassing money. Just by mere chance the writer saw your hockey game to-day. He noted the splendid, sturdy physiques of the youngsters, and made inquiries about the two clubs.

"Then the present writer realized all that he had lost in the mad rush for wealth. Boys, health is worth a thousand times more than a good standing at the bank! The writer, while watching the game, determined to show his tardy approval of outdoor athletics by making a little Christmas gift to the boys of the winning club.

"Captain Manley, it is my desire that, on Christmas morning, you hand to each member a ten-dollar note, inclosed in as good a pocketbook as you can buy with the balance of the proceeds of my check. It is my further request that you do not divulge my name. Make the gift to the club in your own name, for I have learned that it is to you that all the credit for the club's being and success is due. It is through yourself, therefore, that the club receives its collective and individual gift."

Frank folded up the note again, adding:

"That's all."

"Then, three rousing cheers for the unknown!" proposed Joe, vociferously.

The clubhouse rang with those cheers!

"And, if you know where to reach this unknown," begged Hal, "tell him with all our thanks how we regard this great gift."

"Hear! Hear!"

And then there rose a low murmur of voices that was heard all through the cottage.

Of what were they talking?

Thirty-six boys were discussing how to dispose best of a ten-dollar bill that had fallen from the sky—that was all!

By twos and threes the youngsters left. Noon found the clubhouse deserted.

And now Manley was certainly not the only youngster in Woodstock who was putting to himself the question:

"Was there ever such a Christmas before?"

But perhaps Cranston was the wisest of the lot when it came to disposing of the money.

"What are you going to do with yours?" asked Dick Foster.

"Never having had so much before, I'm going to keep it all in my pocket for the present. I shall do a heap of thinking before I break this ten-dollar bill, for I want to get the fullest kind of a ten dollars' worth back for it!"

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE DEVIL IN MEN'S HEARTS.

And as to Gaston Duval's Christmas?

He slept through the forenoon, then rose at last and rang, sending for his mail.

One letter there was. He tore open the envelope, drawing out a sheet on which were penned a few words in a crabbed hand.

Then he surveyed the other piece of paper that the envelope had contained.

It was a check from his Uncle Claude. The amount of the check made it the richest Christmas present received that day in Woodstock, but Gaston tossed it on to a table, reached for a cigarette and lighted it.

"It's like the old fellow to send money to those who don't need it," muttered the nephew. "Heigh ho! So this is Christmas? I believe I'd have forgotten the fact if it hadn't been for the letter. Well, the money may come in handy one of these days to pay for some new piece of deviltry."

Young Gaston sauntered to one of the windows of his room, and looked out over the snow-clad town.

"No one to wish me happiness to-day, except the bell-boy and the waiter, who expect tips," he muttered. "Well, well! To be rich and yet alone in a small town like this."

From the window he caught sight of Frank Manley's



happy face as that young athlete turned the street corner.

"So that's my present ambition—to ruin that young nobody and drive him from town in disgrace! Humph! It would have been almost better to have made friends with him."

Then, suddenly, Gaston Duval stepped over before the mirror on the bureau, looking at himself in the glass's reflection with a look of disgust.

"What ails you, Gaston?" he inquired, angrily, and half aloud. "There was a time when you enjoyed fighting. Ruining enemies was a pastime. Are you growing old and feeble at nineteen?"

Snatching up a pair of Indian clubs, and crossing to open a window, he was soon busy with swinging the clubs.

Other exercises followed.

With all his idle, useless life, he owed it still to his uncle that he had been trained to take much care of his body.

His magnificent young muscles swelled through his light clothing as he worked.

A half an hour of this, and his mood changed.

"I believe I'll skip the bath, breakfast, and then go out. I need some of this fine air in my lungs."

Before two o'clock Duval was on the street.

There was no one in the town on whom he could call. He took one of the roads out into the country, tramping steadily.

It was after dark when he found himself in Woodstock again.

Had he enjoyed his long, brisk tramp in this life-giving air?

Physically, no doubt, he had benefited, but his thoughts had been all out of tune with the day.

All the time he had dwelt darkly on the means of crushing Frank Manley.

"To think that I have come to waste so much gray matter on a mere country bumpkin!" he sneered, in disgust at himself.

Yet the fact that he had failed signally, so far, to work any harm to Manley added to Gaston's discontent with himself.

And there was Joe Prescott, also, to be dealt meanly with. Not to forget that rough chief of police who had so humiliated him before a streetful of the village's loungers.

Almost without realizing it himself, Gaston Duval turned into the now deserted street on which Frank Manley lived.

There were lights in all the downstairs rooms.

Figures were flitting to and fro, casting shadows over the drawn shades.

Laughter and the sounds of young voices came out.

Here was a happy American home, where happy beings who possessed friends had gathered to spend the joyous holiday night.

Duval slipped into the yard, crept close to one of the windows.

From underneath he listened. He heard the merry voice of "that bumpkin," Frank Manley.

Then Joe's hearty, cheery voice chimed in.

Two of his enemies were here, enjoying themselves!

There were others, also, but for them what did Duval care?

They had not crossed his path.

But as to Frank and Joe—what would he not give to bring the groan of pain to replace their happy laughter?

For a few moments Duval stood and clenched his hands in impotent ugliness.

But he would find the way! Of that he had not a doubt.

Another chorus of happy laughter, and Duval, unable to endure the proof of so much happiness among his enemies, stole away.

Out in the street again, he strode blindly along, his dark anger growing every instant, yet the sense of helplessness also assailing him.

Where he went was now a matter of no concern to him.

He must think, think, think!—until that hideous, seething brain evolved some wild plan by which he could punish those who had done him no wrong!

Soon, as if coming to himself, he realized that he was on the railway track, away beyond the depot, and headed, if he kept straight on, out into the country again.

Yet something in the sensation of stumbling roughly along over the rails and ties comforted him—gave him a sensation of trampling over obstacles.

Ahead, a lantern bobbed unsteadily.

Gaston watched, and saw the bearer of the light half stagger toward a shed belonging to the railroad.

This building stood far away from the town, out on a lonesome bit of track.

Yet, with a sense of wanting some kind of companionship, Duval followed the light.

The man with the lantern had stopped before the shed. He was fumbling unsteadily with a key and a lock.

"Want any help?" asked Duval, approaching the wobbling figure.

"Guessh I'm all (hic!) right," answered the man thus appealed to.

He made several rather vicious jabs at the lock with the key, while Gaston Duval, standing by, looked on with a smile.

"Better let me help you," hinted the young stranger. "I'm rather used to such locks."

He took the key from the fellow, turned it in the lock, and opened the door of the shed.

Then, taking the lantern also, Gaston looked inside.

It was an ordinary railway tool shed, but well supplied with the equipment of a section foreman.

The man lurched heavily in, staring stupidly about.

"Going to work to-night?" asked Gaston, making no effort to conceal his smile.

"No. Ni-atchman."

"Oh! Night watchman, eh?"

"Yehr! Mean (hic) shame have'r work 'night. Lots goo' fellows up (hic) there. Had leave (hic) 'em."



"It certainly is a shame to have to leave a lot of good fellows on Christmas night and have to come down here," agreed Gaston. "But what do you have to be here for? There's nothing of much value here."

"No. But danger!"

"Why, what danger?"

"Dyn'inite."

As the fellow, lurching as he stood, pointed to a corner, Duval's gaze followed in the same direction.

"Oho! A stock of dynamite, eh? And so close to the track that the railroad folks want it watched. Well, you're certainly a good man for the position. No danger while a man like yourself is here in charge," rejoined Gaston, grinning.

Fumbling in one of his overcoat pockets the man brought out a stump of a pipe. This he filled with crumbs of tobacco.

Duval, watching him intently, saw the fellow take out a grimy match.

"Here," uttered Duval, quickly, "that pipe isn't filled right. Let me show you how to fill it. And the match. I'll light it for you."

Willingly enough, the drunken man relinquished pipe and match. Duval, passing them behind himself to the other hand, threw them far out into a snowdrift.

"Well?" demanded the drunken man at last.

"Why don't you smoke?"

"Where's (hic) pipe?"

"Why, I gave that back to you."

"No, didn't."

"Certainly. A minute ago. Look in your pocket, and you'll find it."

With drunken gravity the man searched his pockets, shaking his head all the while.

"Oh, well," laughed the Creole, "it doesn't matter, after all. I'm going to furnish you with some fun. Take this money and go back to the good fellows. Drink and smoke a while. I'll watch this place for you all right. Don't come back until you're ready. I'm a good fellow, too, and I wish you a Merry Christmas. Go and have one!"

While he was talking, Duval had pushed the fellow slowly out of the shed, and had set him on his way back to the village.

Duval stood there in the snow, watching the fellow, with an evil smile.

"He's too drunk to remember me. Who'd take his word, anyway?"

A strangely evil light glowing in his eyes, Gaston tiptoed back into the shed.

Ah, yes! Here was the dynamite, box and box of it—a few pounds in each box, and stacked up.

And here were boxes of string fuse.

One of these latter Gaston Duval opened with a steel wedge that he found on the floor.

He helped himself to much of the fuse, then rose and snatched up a box of dynamite, secreting it under his coat.

Now he hurried from the shed, stole off up the track, and then across lots to a street just outside the town.

Nothing in Duval's manner suggested excitement when he entered the hotel. He was seen by several people, but he had been well trained in concealing excitement.

If those who looked his way noted the slight bulge under Gaston's overcoat they doubtless connected it with Christmas, the season of gladsome packages.

Once in his room, Duval turned the key in the lock. Then, after removing his coat, he sat down and took a very long breath.

His fingers were shaking tremulously. He reached out for a cigarette, as if he thought that one of those pests would steady him.

Then followed a long time spent in preparing his strange prize for the work for which it was intended.

Time slipped by unheeded, but at last, with a smothered exclamation upon glancing at his watch, the young Creole looked upon his work as finished.

Once more he slipped on his overcoat. The new parcel was concealed under it.

This time the young man, with the devil in his heart, slipped down and out by way of the ladies' entrance, and thus escaped being seen.

The streets were quite deserted at this hour.

Again the young man's coolness came to the fore. He did not hurry, nor did he court suspicion by glancing covertly about him.

He made straight for the street on which Manley lived. He found himself the only passerby on that thoroughfare.

The plain little Manley home was still lighted up.

From inside came merry voices.

All was jollity there, at this moment, but the prowler knew that he could soon change all that.

Stepping into the yard, he hastened stealthily around to the side of the house.

Here, stooping, he tried one of the cellar windows. It was locked.

Small obstacle, that! A light blow with a gloved hand, and the glass was shattered.

He did not even listen to note whether the slight sound had attracted notice. He knew that in a house where jollity reigned no such noise would be noticed.

Inserting one hand through the break in the glass, he found the catch and turned it.

It was a fairly tight squeeze, but he lowered himself through the window, bundle and all.

Here, with a pocket flash lamp, he studied the cellar and picked out his location.

With some care he placed his mine, containing dynamite enough to wreck a street.

The fuse was already fastened. Holding this in his hand, and unwinding as he went, Gaston Duval backed toward the window.

It was a simple matter to reach up and to pull himself up and out.

And now, once more crouching on the ground beside the cellar window, he examined the string fuse with great care.

"It mustn't fail me!" he muttered. "I've chanced too



much on this to endure failure through a bit of powder and fibre."

Yet he felt reasonably sure of the fuse. He had cut off and tested bits of it in his room at the hotel.

"Now, Frank Manley, you shall have the crowning gift of what must have been a lively day!" uttered Duval.

His hand did not tremble now. He had steeled himself for the final step of his fearful task.

Holding the fuse line with his left hand, his right hand went into one of his pockets in search of his match-case.

## CHAPTER XII.

### FRANK MANLEY'S CHRISTMAS GIFT.

Flare!

The first match puffed out in the biting breeze.

With the second lucifer Gaston used more care, shielding the tiny flame an instant from the wind, until it was ready to apply to the fuse end.

Glow! There was a tiny spark, now, at the end of the fuse.

Gaston watched it anxiously, wondering whether the wind would put it out.

But, no! That fuse had been made to burn in the wind.

The glow grew and traveled slowly along the slender tape of fuse.

"It's going to work all right," nodded the Creole boy.

His breath was coming a little quickly, now, and his color was heightened.

Still he lingered, gazing at that slowly moving glow, as if fascinated.

He knew that there was no danger of a premature explosion.

From tests of the fuse that he had made in his room, Duval figured that it would need at least ten minutes for the glow to reach the mine.

He prepared to rise and stealthily to leave the yard.

"I shall be in the hotel billiard-room when the blast is heard!" he chuckled, inwardly.

Some mistake there!

For, just as he strove to rise, he felt himself seized from behind and hurled violently forward and down.

His forehead struck a sharp angle of rock in the stone underpinning.

Then he felt himself being turned over upon his back, and some one knelt on his chest, gripping forcefully at his throat.

It was Frank Manley.

Joe stood coolly by, prepared to give a hand wherever it was needed, while Hal Spofford bent forward to pinch out the deadly glow in the fuse string.

"Duval, this is about the limit of wickedness!" uttered Frank Manley, a grim ferocity in his eyes and speech. "So you would destroy my mother and her guests!"

Duval lay there like one dazed. He did not struggle. What would be the use of resisting?

He felt, instinctively, that Frank Manley was his physical superior.

And, besides, there were Hal and Joe at hand—both powerful and neither one afraid of trouble in any form that it came.

"Hand me your cord, Hal," quivered Manley. "We'll tie this jail-bird."

Jail-bird?

Now they had struck Duval's sense of shame.

He realized how his act would stand in the eyes of the law.

Jail-bird?

No! He would die sooner than be arrested for the crime that he had been foul enough to attempt!

He struck out fearfully, now, using hands and feet, and striving to rise.

But it was all in vain.

He was no match against three such youths.

They handled him roughly but easily, rolling him over on his face, and Manley knelt on his back, while Joe pinned his feet.

Then Manley applied the torturing pressure just under his victim's ear lobes, until Duval was forced to give in and to place his hands behind his back.

Then Manley tied the wrists, passing a loop of this cord up and around Duval's throat, so that any attempt to pull his hands free would result only in a self-administered choking.

There he lay, at last, this scoundrel who stopped at nothing in the pursuit of revenge.

Not a sound had penetrated into the house. Inside, the merrymaking was going on, undisturbed.

As Duval was rolled over once more on his back, he noted that all three of the young athletes wore their overcoats.

They had been out, then? Probably had not been in the house during the last two or three hours!

"Watch him," ordered Manley. "I'll go into the house, and down in the cellar, and see to what this fuse string led."

He was gone some four or five minutes, when he returned, holding the box of dynamite.

"This shows what he meant to do," quivered Manley, displaying the dynamite sticks to his horrified comrades. "It meant nothing out of the ordinary for this worse than jail-bird to blow up my mother's home, with herself and her guests in it!"

"I thought you fellows were in there!" muttered Duval.

"Then your sole thought was not to slay a defenceless woman?"

"I wouldn't have wasted all my time if I hadn't expected to get you, Frank Manley!"

"And why did you want to 'get' me?"

"Because I have no use whatever for you."

"You're certainly a wonder, when it comes to expres-



ing your dislikes," retorted Frank, grimly. "Are there any more people in town whom you don't like?"

"What are you going to do with me?" demanded Gaston.

Manley looked down at his prisoner, with a queer smile.

"Now, what would you expect, Duval?"

"I don't expect anything. I can't, when I'm wholly in your power."

"Drop that phase of it altogether," suggested the young athlete. "To what do you think you're entitled?"

"Nothing," admitted Duval, coolly. "I lost, and I have no right to expect anything. It's always the winner who takes the stakes. The loser can only wait."

"You'll have time to do plenty of that," hinted Hal, cheerfully. "I don't know whether you can be sentenced for life, but I'm mighty certain that you'll be a pretty old man by the time that you get out into the world again."

"Do you think that I'd consent to live long—in prison?" demanded Gaston Duval.

"It is certain only that you've lost the right to live outside," insisted Spofford.

While Joe chipped in:

"What shall we do with the skunk, Frank? Take him down to the police station, I suppose?"

"Yes," nodded Manley, grimly. "I'm afraid he'll catch a bad cold lying here on the ground."

"It makes you all feel good to sneer at the fellow who lost, doesn't it?" sneered the captive, looking closely at their faces.

"I hadn't thought of that," rejoined Frank, quietly. "My first feeling was of rage. My present feeling is one of wonder that there can live a human being so wretchedly low that he isn't fit even to associate with the beasts in a hog-pen."

"Fine!" sneered Duval. "Fine, isn't it? I have to lie here, tied up, and listen to a lot of country bumpkins who try to say sarcastic things. Do you realize that there isn't as much nerve in all three of your carcasses as there is in my little finger? Do you find fun in tormenting—or trying to torment—the man who can't help himself?"

"Don't take the name of man in vain," retorted Hal, contemptuously. "There isn't a grain of manhood in a thousand tons of your kind. You talk of nerve—it's nothing but insanity. The only place for your kind is at the bottom of the sea, with a sack of stones tied to your neck."

"Don't taunt him," interposed Manley. "Probably it won't humiliate him any. He doesn't need humiliation, anyway, for he's already low enough down."

"To the limbo with him!" clicked Joe.

"Though it's hard on comparatively decent law-breakers to put this carrion in among them," vented Hal, indignantly.

"Let him lie there a moment," said Manley, suddenly. "I want to talk to you fellows."

The three boys withdrew to the front of the yard, yet stood where they could keep their eyes on the prostrate captive.

"This is too bad—altogether too bad," muttered Frank.

"This has been such a gloriously, splendidly happy day! And now to have it all ended by a blot like this."

"Well," interposed Joe, practically, "it's none of our doings. We haven't tried to harm anybody."

"We can't help what others do," added Hal.

"It spoils the perfection of the day, though," sighed Manley.

"Others often do spoil our pleasures," observed Joe.

"Well, I'm more sorry to have had it happen on this day than on any other day in the year—when I've had so much to make me feel that every man is my brother."

"I emphatically disclaim any relationship to that carrion over yonder!" grumbled Joe.

"I wonder if there is any possibility that anything could touch him? Could anything make him respect his brother's happiness?" demanded Frank, looking disconsolately toward his fallen enemy.

"See here, Frank Manley," blazed Joe. "What on earth are you driving at, anyway?"

"Merely thinking," replied Frank, with a faint smile.

"Are you letting any pity sneak into your heart for that reptile over yonder?"

"Not pity, perhaps, so much as wonder."

"See here," proposed Joe, "to-morrow I'll send to New York and get a box of cobras for you to experiment with. They're said to be the meanest and deadliest snakes on the footstool. You can practice at taming 'em!"

Hal was silent. He, too, was beginning to think. The Christmas spirit had gotten strongly into him.

"Watch him a minute," begged Frank, suddenly.

He walked around to the further side of the house, felt in a vest-pocket, and drew out his new watch.

Opening it, he struck a match and peered intently at the face of Kitty Dunstan.

He tried to study the eyes in that pictured face as he pondered.

Click! He had closed the watch, which he placed carefully back in its appropriate pocket.

Then he stepped around to the front of the house, once more to hold whispered confab with his chums.

Together the three walked slowly back to where the captive lay.

"Duval," asked Manley, very slowly, "how would you feel about it if we were to let you go?"

"Feel like getting away before you had time to change your mind, I suppose," rejoined Gaston, with a flickering smile, as he looked up at the three faces in turn.

"Do you think you could be any better fellow if we were to relent and refrain from taking you to the station?"

"Don't know, I'm sure," drawled the captive. "I have never had occasion to think out that problem."

"We're undecided whether to let you go or not," went on Manley, quietly. "We feel that we'd like to do something yet to observe the day. But we don't want to make any mistake."

"I thought you had it all settled what to do with me," murmured Gaston Duval, in amazement.



"No; to honor the day, we'd set you free now if we were sure that the experiment would turn out to be worth while."

"Generally," replied Duval, coolly, "when a man is in doubt as to an experiment, he tries it."

"Are you disposed to make any statement for yourself?"

"Certainly," Duval promptly answered. "I'd prefer to have my liberty."

"If we allow that, will you cultivate a squarer and more decent disposition after this?"

"What do you expect me to say, Manley?"

"Well, you might offer your word that you'll lead a different sort of existence hereafter."

"My word?" mocked Duval. "What's the use? You wouldn't believe me."

"We'd try to, if you spoke with any appearance of sincerity."

"No; I'm not going to give my word, or indulge in any kind of sentimental talk," retorted the captive. "The best I can say is this: Turn me loose, if you will be good enough, and then see whether your conduct brings about any change such as you seem to desire. I shan't try to dynamite your house again to-night, anyway. I'll give you my word at least for that much."

"And no more?"

"What's the use of promising more? How much of a good estimate do you put on my word, anyway?"

From a near-by house came the strains of a piano, and voices joined in a joyous song of Christmas.

Silently, Manley bent over and unknotted the cords that bound the young Creole.

Hal and Joe looked on in equal silence.

Slowly the late captive stretched himself, then got up easily to his feet.

"I'm much obliged, I'm sure," he said, with a slight bow.

Hal and Joe drew back in silence as Duval started toward the gate.

Manley kept at his side.

As they reached the gate they paused.

Down the street a front door opened. Guests were leaving after a happy evening. Women's joyous laughter rang on the frosty air.

"Duval," said Manley, suddenly, but in a very low voice. "I'm heartily sorry for you. I doubt if you have ever known what it is to have one man whom you can truly call your friend. Surely, no pure woman has ever taken loving interest in your life. I hope that both these great things may come into your life before it is too late. Your liberty to-night is my Christmas gift to you. I hope it will bring you some of that real happiness which I doubt if you have ever known as yet. Late in the day as it is, I venture to wish you a Merry Christmas."

While Frank was speaking, Gaston Duval's eyes were lowered; his head hung forward.

But now he looked up.

"Thank you, Manley. Good night. Will you shake hands?"

Manley hesitated, then drew back.

"I'd rather not—to-night, Duval. I—I can't forget some things just yet. But I hope the day will soon arrive when I shall be glad to take your hand."

"Good night, then!"

"Good night!"

Frank went slowly back to his chums.

"I don't know whether or not I've done a weak and foolish thing," mused Manley, aloud.

"Mercy shouldn't be error's twin," hinted Hal.

"Time will show," said Joe.

"Say," said Manley, suddenly, "do you fellows know that it's getting mighty late for fellows who turn in as early as we do? Do you realize that we have a fortnight of holiday ahead of us, and that we ought to have every blessed minute of sunlight in the outdoor air? I'm for going to bed."

The three chums shook hands, slowly, almost silently, but warmly.

Then two of them left Frank and started homeward.

Mrs. Manley's guests were about leaving. They were waiting only for a word with our hero, who, with Hal and Joe, had been invited to spend the evening with three merry maidens in the great house up on the hill.

Just before Mrs. Manley went to her room that night she softly opened the door of her son's room to see whether he was yet asleep.

He was standing before the bureau.

Having just wound his new watch, he was now gazing intently at the pictured face in the back of the case.

## THE END.

When Christmas has gone, but the holidays linger, then is the grandest and keenest time for outdoor sport. It's the best week of the whole year, as you'll agree after having read "FRANK MANLEY'S ICE CARNIVAL; OR, THE GRANDEST WINTER WEEK ON RECORD." It will be published complete in No. 17 of Frank Manley's Weekly. Out next week! Never before has such a rousing story of winter sport been written!

SPECIAL NOTICE: All back numbers of this weekly are always in print. If you cannot obtain them from any newsdealer, send the price in money or postage stamps by mail to FRANK TOUSEY, PUBLISHER, 24 UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK, and you will receive the copies you order by return mail.



## PRACTICAL TALKS ON TRAINING

By "Physical Director"

No. 48.

I would give a good deal to know how large is the percentage of my readers who have not yet gone in for the physical training life.

This Talk is directed largely at those who are not yet in training, for he who has become a young athlete does not need to be told what glorious fun is to be extracted from the Christmas holidays.

This is a magnificent time of the year in which to take up with outdoor training work.

The air is keen and crisp—and absolutely pure, even in the cities. The sunshine carries life in it, without any of the prostration that may be found in the summer rays.

Probably almost every boy who reads this weekly, if he did not already possess them, has received a sled or a pair of skates at Christmas.

Get out of doors and use your treasures!

Don't be afraid of overdoing. Skating and coasting are not likely to be overdone if a very small amount of common sense be used.

Even if you are so unfortunate as to have neither sled nor skates, there is a great load of fun to be had for nothing and without implements if there be snow in your neighborhood.

Build a snow fort! Not a little, puny affair, big enough for two or three boys to get into.

Round up all the boys in your neighborhood, and build a great, square fort, at least twenty-five feet on a side, with walls broad enough and strong enough to stand on and do battle.

Build a mound in the center of the fort and hoist a flag from a pole there.

Then divide the boys up into two "armies," bearing in mind that the attacking army should be considerably larger than the army of defense.

Then go in for battle-royal around that fort!

Show just how fair and sportsmanlike you can be in that fight. Avoid every temptation to be rough, but have a royal good fight in which there is plenty of excitement and no one gets hurt.

Don't make hard snowballs. If you catch any fellow putting a stone, or anything else hard, inside his snowball, or if you catch a fellow freezing his snowball in water—then duck him plentifully in the snow, and thereafter kick him out of all your winter sports!

If you can't get together enough boys in your neighborhood for a real snow fort, then build a snow house. Even two boys can do that.

Did you ever build a snow house? Know how?

I'll tell you the simplest way.

Get out your shovels and heap up a great pile of snow. Once in a while, as you heap the snow up, pour water over it. That's to freeze the mass and make it harder.

It's a work of hours for two boys to shovel up a big enough heap of snow, but it's grand exercise, taken right out-of-doors, and the fun afterward makes all the work worth while.

Now, when you've gotten your great heap of snow ready, and have wet it with water several times during the raising of the pile, let it stand over night to freeze and settle.

The first thing next morning go at the pile again. Now, dig a "doorway." This does not need to be more than two feet high.

The doorway is really a tunnel that is dug right into the pile.

Now, when you have gotten the tunnel far enough into the pile, begin to dig some of the snow away from overhead and pass it out to your chum or chums.

By and by you will have a scooped-out place inside the pile that is big enough to stand up in.

Now, go right on scooping out the snow from the inside of the pile, and let a chum or two inside to help you.

Keep on scooping away the inside of the pile, being careful, however, not to scoop away so much that the walls or ceiling are left too thin. If you make this mistake your snow house will collapse, and you will have to begin all over again.

But whatever mistakes you make in building the first snow house will serve as experience to guide you in making the second.

The Esquimaux Indians live through the winter in snow houses. I have known youngsters in this country to make so comfortable a snow house that they have been able to sleep comfortably and healthfully in it through the night.

When your house is built, take in a small table, with soap boxes, or something of the sort, for seats.

Have you any idea how good a luncheon tastes in a snow house? If you haven't, try it!

If there happens to be no snow in your neighborhood, then the frozen roads make ideal tracks for tramping and running.

It is easy enough to find some simple and healthful form of outdoor sport that will keep you out of doors most of the daylight time through the holidays.

You will go back to school or to work feeling ten times better than you have felt in a long time.

So, if it happens that you haven't yet taken up with a system of physical training, don't mind about the system during the holidays, but simply keep out of doors and active all the time.

This will teach you the value of physical training for making you feel just right.

After the holidays are over you will realize so fully the benefits of training that you will be ready to take up the system!



# Letters from Readers

**NOTICE.**—Write letters for this page on only one side of the paper. Number your questions. Do not ask questions on the same paper containing mail orders. Immediate answers cannot be given, as "Frank Manley's Weekly" is printed several weeks ahead of the date of issue. Address all questions for this department to "Physical Director," No. 24 Union Square, New York.

Milbury, Mass., September 10, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I have read your weekly from No. 1 to the end of the publication of the Young Athlete's Weekly. Now that change in name has been made I shall continue to read the best weekly published. I find it very interesting and instructive and it is the only weekly I read at all. I give my measurements when stripped. Age 16 years 9 months; weight, 130 pounds; height, 5 feet 7½ inches; shoulders across, 16 inches; chest, normal, 31½ inches; inflated, 36½ inches; biceps, normal, 9½ inches; expanded, 10¾ inches; forearm, normal, 10 inches; expanded, 10¼ inches; wrists, 6¾ inches; waist, 28 inches; hips, 32 inches; thighs, 19 inches; calves, 12½ inches; neck, 14 inches. Here are some of my records: Broad jump, standing, 8 feet 6 inches; running, 16 feet; high jump, running, 4 feet 4 inches. (1) How are my measurements compared with my age, etc.? My weak and strong points? (2) I like long-distance running. What should I do to develop myself for this? (3) I follow your directions in regard to eating, but am troubled with my stomach. It generally is sour. What should I do for this? (4) What sort of exercise do I need most? I played baseball all summer and am playing half back on a football team this fall. With three cheers for Frank Manley and best wishes to you and the publishers, I am,

A Fellow Who Thinks the Woodstock Athletic Club is All Right.

P. S.—I hope Hob Prouty is reinstated in the club. I think he would be a good center on the football team.

(1) More chest expansion and larger biceps needed. (2) Practice constantly, gradually increasing the distance until you can run five miles easily. (3) You are evidently eating too much, and not chewing your food well enough. Never drink at meal times, but use water freely between meals. (4) All around exercise.

Lestershire, N. Y., September 11, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I have read Frank Manley's Weekly up to date. I have a few questions to ask. I am 4 feet 4 inches in my stocking feet. I am 14 years and 5 months old and I weigh 65 pounds. My waist measure is 22 1-2 inches normal, expanded 25. My chest expanded is 28 inches; my chest normal is 25 inches. I have a very weak stomach. (1) How can I develop the muscles in my stomach? (2) What can I do to grow stronger all over my body? (3) Would you advise me to use Manley's training table for eating?

Yours truly, J. Ernest Hinman.

Measurements all right as far as given. (1) Abdominal work in Nos. 28 and 32 of The Young Athlete's Weekly. (2) Exercise faithfully; it's the only way. (3) Yes.

Chicago, Ill., September 11, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

Kindly forgive me for asking you a few questions. I am 13 years old, and weigh 75 pounds; height, 4 feet 7 inches. I am very weak and I have no exercise at all. (1) Will you kindly tell me how I may get healthy and strong? (2) And what exercise to do to make muscle? (3) The Young Athlete's Weekly is the best and the publisher better still. Yours with cheers,

Joseph Goldberg, 567 Taylor Street.

(1) Read Talks 44 and 45 very carefully, and then go in for all-around exercise, being careful to make a very moderate beginning, and to increase the amounts of exercise only as strength gradually comes to you. Nothing is gained by rushing your exercising. Avoid all heavy exer-

cise for some time to come. (2) Same answer. (3) Thank you.

Peace Dale, R. I., September 11, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I thought I would write you a few lines and tell you about my measurements. I have copied off on some paper in big black letters "Read Frank Manley's Weekly," and I hope lots of boys start to read it. I have read lots of them and I think they are all right. I want to ask you if my measurements are all right, and wish to ask you how to get strong. Measurements—Height, 5 feet; neck, 11 inches; wrist, 6 inches; chest, normal, 26 1-4 inches; chest, expanded, 28 1-2 inches; thigh, 16 1-2 inches; calves, 12 1-4 inches; waist 27 7-8 inches; weight, 91 pounds; and I am 14 years 5 months and 10 days old.

Yours truly, James E. Sykes, Jr.

Neck too small, waist much too large. The chest should be capable of more expansion. The way to get strong is to go in for all-around exercise. Read Talks 44 and 45.

Little Rock, Ark., September 9, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I have read every issue of the Young Athlete's Weekly up to date, and I think it is fine. Frank Manley is an ideal American boy. I would like to ask a few questions. I am 14 years old and my measurements are as follows: Neck, 12¼ inches; biceps, 9¼ inches; chest, normal, 31 inches; chest, contracted, 28 inches; chest, expanded, 32½ inches; forearm, 8½ inches; wrist, 6 inches; waist, 25 inches; hips, 26¾ inches; thigh, 15¾ inches; calf, 11¼ inches; ankle, 8 inches; height, 4 feet 11 inches; weight, without shoes, stockings and coat, only 82 pounds. (1) How many pounds underweight am I? (2) What are my weak points and how can I remedy them? (3) Am I well proportioned? Sincerely yours,

A Constant Reader.

(1) Not much underweight. (2) Chest expansion too small. Read Talks 44 and 45. (3) In general, yes.

Washington, D. C., September 10, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

Being a zealous reader of your Frank Manley's Weekly, I take the liberty to ask you a few questions. I am 12 years old and weigh 80 pounds. (1) Is that a good weight for my age? My height is 4 feet 10 inches; waist, 27 inches; thigh, 16 inches; wrist, 5; neck, 11; chest, 27; expanded, 31 inches. (2) How are my measurements? (3) How could I improve my weak points? Shoulder across, 13 inches. I read the Liberty Boys of '76. Hurrah for the Frank Manley Weekly. I'm glad Tod Owen is reforming. Yours truly,

M. E. L.,

(A would-be athlete.)

Measurements good, but too much waist line. Take up the abdominal work in Nos. 28 and 32 of The Young Athlete's Weekly.

323 W. 26th St., New York, Sept. 13, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I have not followed your advice when you said not to drink with meals. I also have been your constant reader ever since they began. I mean your Athlete's Weekly. I have but one question to ask. I have very bad blood, and would like to know a remedy for this. Hoping I get an answer soon, I remain,

Yours,

Constant Reader.

A complete answer would take much more space than you appear to think. Drugs or wines have no place in improving the blood. The bet-

terment comes through more careful diet and faithful attention to all-around physical training. Read, attentively, Talks 33, 34, 35, 44 and 45.

Brooklyn, N. Y., September 12, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I have read all of the Young Athlete's (now called the Frank Manley), and like them very much. I am 14 years of age and stand 5 feet 2 inches in my stockings. My weight is 110 pounds and my neck is 13 inches. I am an all-around athlete and a swift runner, but I cannot come up with the "Up and At 'Em Boys." Hoping this letter does not make the acquaintance of the waste-basket, I will now close my letter with three cheers and a tiger for Frank Manley, the "Up and At 'Em Boys," the Physical Director and Tod Owen who has become so good by dropping all of his cowardly tricks to injure Manley.

Joseph A. Cunningham,  
An All-Around Athlete.

At 14 you should not expect to come up with the records of the "Up and At 'Em Boys," who average three or four years older than yourself. From the few measurements given I judge that you are finely built.

Natchitoches, La., September 7, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

Please excuse me for taking liberty to ask you a few questions. (1) Am I too small for my age. My height is 4 feet 6 1-2 inches; weight 71 pounds. My age is 12 years 8 months. (2) When I play ball I pitch for my team. Several times I have had to leave the box on account of a pain that takes me in my right side. What causes it? and please tell me how I can remedy it. (3) Please tell me how to put speed on an out as I can not put any on one.

An Interested Reader.

J. A. D.

(1) You are a little light, but at your age that need not bother you. (2) The pain is caused, no doubt, by muscular weakness. You should go in especially for the abdominal work, in Nos. 28 and 32 of The Young Athlete's Weekly, also running. Too late for ball advice this year.

Elmira, N. Y., September 17, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I am a young man 15 years of age. You will do me a great favor if you tell me my defects and how to improve them. My weight is 102 pounds, height is 5 feet 6 inches. Chest, normal, 31 inches; expanded, 32½ inches. My arm and wrist are very weak. How can I remedy this? I can run 100 feet in 5 seconds.

Respectfully,

Harry E. Gillespie.

You are more than 20 pounds under weight, and chest expansion is poor. The remedy is just the same as it is for other young men—outdoor air and general exercise. For directions read Talks 44 and 45.

Chicago, September 9, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I have been reading your Young Athlete's Weekly and No. 1 of Frank Manley's Weekly, and I think they are the best ever. I take the liberty of asking a few questions. (1) Is it good for a person to drink water or coffee during a meal? (2) Is pie injurious? Also I have heard that anything that is fried is not healthy. Is this true? (3) I intend to take some forms of physical exercise in the early morning, which I consider my best opportunity, as I work. Is it enough if I sleep from 9.30 P. M. to 5.30 A. M. (8 hours)? (4) What exercise would you advise me to take as I am about to try for a football team as end? (5) What weight should I be? I am 17 years old and weigh 118 pounds. Hoping to see this letter in print, I remain,

An Admirer of Good Literature.

(1) Always harmful, and coffee is harmful at any time. (2) Pies and fried foods are mainstays of the doctor and undertaker. (3) Would advise trying a little earlier. (4) Read Talks 44 and 45. (5) It would depend on other measurements, enough of which you do not supply. Resolution to quit will cure you.

Portland, Ore., September 3, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I take the liberty of asking you a few questions about my measurements. Age, 16 years 1 month; height, 5 feet 2 inches; weight, 117 pounds; chest, normal, 31; expanded, 37¼ inches; neck, 13½



waist, 30 inches; ankles, 9 inches. (1) How are my measurements? (2) Please tell me my weak points. (3) I go to bed at 8.30 and get up at 6.30; work from 7.15 to 6 P. M. (4) Have I got long hours? (5) I am now sick of walking; malaria and the climate are not doing me any good here as I came from Chicago. (6) If I go up a hill with my bicycle or walk a flight of stairs my legs are so tired I have to sit down and rest. (7) Please tell me what I should do about it. Hoping Frank Manley's Weekly will continue.

I remain, yours truly,

Pat Pickles.

(1 and 2) Over weight, and waist almost abnormal; go in strongly for the abdominal exercises. Chest expansion poor. (3 and 4) Your hours of work are too long for your present condition. Can't you get outdoor work? (5 and 6) Your present climate is damp, of course, but the trouble is with yourself. Too much work, too much confinement, too little exercise, and very likely you are sleeping in a closed room and not eating properly.

Johnstown, Pa.

Dear Physical Director:

I have read all of the Young Athlete's Weekly up to the present date and think that they are fine. I take the liberty to ask you a few questions. Height, 5 feet 4 1/4 inches; weight, 103 pounds; arm, 7 3/8 inches; flexed, 8 inches; neck, 11 1/2 inches; chest, normal, 27 inches; expanded, 29 1/2 inches; calves, 12 inches; width of shoulders, 16 1/2 inches. (1) Am I very much under weight and what can I do to put on flesh? (2) I do not take any morning runs as I do not get up until about 8 o'clock. (3) I do not belong to any gymnasium and therefore have nothing to practice with. Would you advise me to join one? Please tell me all of my defects and how to rectify them. Thanking you beforehand, I remain,

Yours truly,

Pudden Pie.

(1) You are about 10 pounds under weight, and measurements generally a little below standard. (2 and 3) Your questions answer themselves. Get after that morning run, and by all means join a gym!

Washington, D. C., Sept. 13, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

Being a reader of the Young Athlete's Weekly, I would like to ask you a few questions for some information on the following: Age, 15; height, 5 feet 5 inches; weight, 120 pounds. What I would like to know is whether it is good for me to punch the punching bag every morning when I get up or wait until I take my run as I get up one hour before breakfast every morning and take a run around the block two or three times. As I work every night until late I don't have time in the evening. I am trying very hard to become a wrestler and would be very much obliged for your information.

Yours truly,

R. C. R.

Height and weight in good proportion. Punch the bag first, then run, then bathe. Train for all-around good condition if you wish to become a wrestler.

New York City, September 15, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I am 15 years of age; weight, 97 pounds; height, 5 feet 3 inches; chest, normal, 30 inches; expanded, 32 inches; neck, 11 1/2 inches; waist, 22 1/2 inches; calves, 12 inches; ankles, 9 inches. (1) How are my measurements? (2) What exercises should I take for high jumping? Hoping to see this in the best boys' weekly, I remain,

Your sincere friend,

J. M. D.

(1) You are slim, and about 10 pounds under weight. (2) General light gymnastic work, with plenty of running and jumping added.

Fernandina, Fla., September 16, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I am just through reading Frank Manley's Weekly, No. 1, and think it is great. Will you please answer a few questions for me? I am 15 years old and weigh 102 pounds, and am 5 feet 2 1/2 inches. My measurements are: Chest, 30 inches; expanded, 22 1/2 inches; waist, 25 1/2 inches; wrist, 6 1/2 inches; forearm, 9 1/2 inches; biceps, 9 inches; calves, 12 1/2 inches; ankles, 2 1/2 inches; across shoulders, 15 1/2 inches; neck, 12 1/2 inches. (1) What are my weak points? (2) What are my strong points? If any (2) How much should

I weigh? (4) Can I become a good athlete? Thanking you in advance, I remain,

H. T. W.

(1) Waist a shade too large, biceps a shade small. (2) Good chest expansion. (3) About 108 to 110 pounds. (4) Certainly, if you are faithful at training.

New Orleans, La., September 10, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

Being a reader of your great weekly, I take the liberty to ask you these questions: Measurements—age, 13 years; height, 5 feet; weight, 92 pounds; chest, normal, 29 1/2 inches; expanded, 31 1/2 inches; biceps, left and right arm 10 inches; neck, 12 1/2 inches; waist, 24 1/2 inches; wrist, 6 1/2 inches. (1) How are my measurements? (2) Have I the making of an athlete? (3) Am I heavy enough to play football? An admirer,

R. E. L.

(1) Satisfactory. (2) Yes; if you do faithful training work right along. (3) You might prove a good end on a junior team.

Milwaukee, Wis., September 16, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

Have read your weeklies and think they are very good. The letters in the back of the books I enjoy very much. I would, very much, like you to answer a few of my questions. I am 14 years and 9 months, and I weigh 85 pounds. I am 4 feet and about 8 inches. I have a morning route and have about 9 hours' sleep—5 before and 4 after midnight. (1) How much too small am I for my age and too light for my weight? (2) How tall must I be and what weight for my age? (3) Have I too much or not enough sleep? (4) What must I do to grow? Hoping to see this in print soon, respectfully yours,

Benj. F. Cohen.

Your measurements, as far as you give them, are satisfactory at your age, and I consider that you have sleep enough. That morning route is an excellent form of compulsory outdoor exercise, especially if you walk, as I hope you do. And you can get in some running on this route. If you study diet carefully, and get in some gymnastic work during the day you should grow fast enough and be strong enough.

Pittsburg, Pa.

Dear Physical Director:

Being a reader of your fine weekly, I desire to have you answer a few questions. Age, 15 years; weight, 97 pounds; chest, normal, 29 inches; chest, expanded, 33 inches; neck, 12 inches; shoulder to shoulder, 17 inches; biceps, normal, 9 inches; biceps, expanded, 11 inches; waist, 26 inches; forearm, 9 1/2 inches; wrist, 6 1/2 inches; calf, 12 inches; ankle, 9 inches; height, 5 feet 2 inches. (1) How are my measurements? (2) How is my weight compared with my height? Thanking you beforehand, I remain,

Thomas Hill.

You seem to have the framework and muscular development of a small young athlete. You are an excellent specimen of boyhood. Your weight is not more than two or three pounds under. That chest expansion is bully!

San Francisco, August 31, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I take the great liberty in asking your advice in regard to my measurements and physical condition. I am 5 feet 4 inches in height. My chest is 30 inches, normal, and 32 1/2 inches, expanded. My calf is 11 1/4 inches; biceps, normal, 8 inches; flexed, 9 inches; waist, 26 1/2 inches; forearm, 9 inches; neck, 12 1/2 inches; wrist, 6 inches; ankles, 8 inches; shoulders 12 inches, from one to another, and thighs 15 1/2 inches. I weigh 105 pounds, and am 13 1/2 years old. I ask you the following questions: (1) What are my defects? (2) How shall I overcome them? (3) What should I go in for? (4) Is swimming good twice or more times a week in salt water? (5) Is it good in the evening? (6) When shall I retire and rise? (7) What is the best diet for me? (8) I like coffee very much and drink from 1 to 3 cups in the morning. (9) How shall I overcome this and is it dangerous? (10) I can run the 880 yards with a little discomfort. (11) If I should run through the streets in a gymnasium or running suit they would think me crazy, so what shall I do? (12) Can you give me the address of the Woodstock Club or any of the boys? (13) Why doesn't Dick Gaylord think? (14) What is

the matter with Little Willie? (15) Map out a course for me to follow to overcome my defects. (16) I have no gym, so what should you advise me to do? (17) Is exercising in the evening before retiring good? (18) Is a cold bath or plunge in the morning good for me? (19) I just came back from camping and I felt a little improved. (20) Should I exercise upon rising or after breakfast? (21) Why don't you give a picture of the club some time? (22) How can I get speed and endurance in long distance running? Hoping that if I forgot something to ask you, that you notice it and print it. Hoping to see this in print and that you are well and able to give me good advice, I remain, your believer,

E. G. S.

(1) You are eight pounds under weight, and your measurements generally are below standard, except neck and waist. (2 and 3) Read Talks 44 and 45. (4) Yes. (5) Much better in the daytime. (6) Retire at 8.30; rise between 5 and 6 in the morning. (7) The diet question has been thoroughly covered in various Talks. (8 and 9) Simply drop coffee. (10 and 11) You must decide for yourself where to run. (12) No addresses can be furnished in this department. (13) He promised not to! (14) He's all right! (15) See answer to 2. (16) See answer to 2. (17) Not immediately before retiring. (18) Yes, unless you are unable to stand it. (19) Of course! (20) Best time is before breakfast. Never exercise on a full stomach. (21) Perhaps, in the future. (22) By constant practice.

Amherst, O., September 8, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

I have read the Young Athlete's Weekly up to date and think they are all right. How are my measurements? Age, 15 years; height, 5 feet 8 inches; weight, 143 pounds; waist, 31 inches; thighs, 19 1/2 inches; neck, 14 inches; wrists, 7 1/2 inches; calves, 12 1/2 inches; chest, normal, 33 1/2 inches; expanded, 35 1/2 inches; shoulders, 19 inches; upper arm, 10 inches; forearm, 11 inches. (1) How are my measurements? (2) What are my weak points? (3) How can I strengthen them? (4) Is bicycle riding good exercise?

Your Faithful Reader.

(1) Large for your age, but generally well built. (2) Calf too small, and inch and a half more chest expansion needed. (3) Read Talks 44 and 45. (4) Have answered this often: Not harmful if done in great moderation, but there are many better forms of exercise.

McKeesport, Pa., September 11, 1905.

Dear Physical Director:

Being a reader of Frank Manley's Weekly I take the liberty to ask a few questions. I am 15 years old and weigh 95 pounds. Height, 5 feet 1 inch; chest, expanded, 30 inches; chest, normal, 28 inches. (1) What is the best way to increase my weight. (2) What muscles does quilt pitching have the most effect upon? (3) About what distance should I pitch quoits? Yours respectfully,

Lanky.

(1) At your age and height you don't want more weight. (2) Muscles of chest, arm and shoulder, and, somewhat, the muscles of the back. (3) Thirty feet is a great enough distance at your age and size. A greater distance makes the work a strain more than an exercise.

South Bethlehem, Pa.

Dear Physical Director:

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